


Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember David Cohen

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: March 14, 2022

Approved 

Date: 3/14/2022

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 MAYOR'S MARCH BUDGET MESSAGE

RECOMMENDATION

1. Direct the City Manager to prepare a Manager's Budget Addendum with analysis and recommendations for restoring San José Public Library's city-wide operations to pre-pandemic levels, including Sunday hours.

BACKGROUND

Each day, hundreds of residents of all ages are served by the San José Public Library—whether online, at branch libraries, or through over 6,000 multilingual events and programs held across the city over the last year. The library provides invaluable educational and social programs for children that supplement the work of local schools during the pandemic, and it has played a leading role in helping students transition to remote learning through the distribution of hotspot devices and development of new outdoor WiFi networks. Above all, despite restricted hours and library closures, SJPL has remained a community hub, a place where residents can come together, learn, and thrive, both virtually and in-person.

As San José continues to work towards full resumption of city services, as members of the community anticipate a return to normalcy, our residents are looking forward to visiting their local libraries the way they did before the pandemic. We should strive to fully restore SJPL operations to pre-pandemic hours so that residents can once again benefit from the services and programs they provide and enjoy full access to library amenities. In particular, it's crucial that we lay the groundwork for the library to resume full weekend hours, including Sundays; prior to the pandemic, the weekends were a time when the local library was a gathering place for neighbors, a center for community events that brought people together and built a direct conduit between the city and its residents. Ensuring the San José Public Library is as accessible to residents in the coming months as it was two years ago will help rebuild that sense of connection and togetherness.

Our libraries are critical to the health and wellbeing of our community, and our city's recovery from the worst of the pandemic will not truly be complete until San José families are able to fully

enjoy and benefit from the library again. I ask that the City Manager prepare a budget addendum exploring how we can move forward with that goal in mind.