



San Francisco Public Library
100 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

Memorandum

To: Library Commission
From: Susan Hildreth, City Librarian
Re: Relocation Strategy Review
Date: April 15, 2003

We have presented information to the Commission on relocation/interim branch library services plans in October and December 2002. That material is attached for your information. We have also been working closely with community members from the Excelsior neighborhood and library/bond program staff to determine how to provide interim services during the impending closure of the Excelsior Branch in Fall 2003.

Today we are recommending to the Commission that a strategy of limiting the provision of temporary facilities to the Richmond neighborhood only be adopted. We are recommending that you allocate funds that are not used for temporary facilities to support bond program projects so that it can be completed as promised to the voters in November 2000. Although the closure of any library facility is a difficult inconvenience, it is in the best interest of the Library and the City that the branch facilities are permanently improved. All efforts will be made to work with community groups in each neighborhood to determine how interim services can be most appropriately provided and to ensure that the Library's presence remains highly visible in the neighborhood during the branch closure.

Relocation and moving costs

\$4,320,000 has been allocated for relocation and moving in the bond program budget. Please see below the recommended use of the relocation and moving funds.

Use of funds	Proposed 12/02	Proposed 4/03
Moving – new branches	\$250,000 5 branches @ \$50,000	\$50,000 5 branches @ \$10,000
Moving – existing branches	\$550,000 11 branches @ \$50,000	\$380,000 19 branches @ \$20,000
Interim facilities	\$2,500,000 8 sites @ \$312,500	\$500,000 1 site @ \$500,000
Bookmobiles	\$800,000 2 @ \$400,000	\$300,000 2 @ \$150,000
Support Service Center Technology/telephones	Included in interim facilities	\$250,000
Portables	\$200,000 2 @ \$100,000	N/A
Total	\$4,300,000	\$1,480,000

With every month of implementation of the bond program, we have more definite information on program needs and costs. With this information, we have modified the initial allocation of funds for relocation/moving. With the modified scope of interim services, \$2,840,000 would be made available for support of all bond projects.

Services during branch closures

Staff is suggesting that an interim facility be planned for the Richmond Branch only. We anticipate the longest (two years) closure for this facility and it is in a rather unique geographic area of the city, without too many branches nearby. It is also a key resource branch and the second busiest branch in the system. Staff is already beginning to search for possible sites for a temporary facility. We expect to close the Richmond Branch in Fall 2004 so it is not too soon to begin to locate a facility. If we were able to identify facilities that met the Library's needs and were available at no charge in other neighborhoods, we would certainly consider providing services in the alternate locations, but it is unlikely that we will find such locations at no charge.

We are in the process of purchasing two new bookmobiles that will be placed in various neighborhoods during branch closures. We plan to work with each neighborhood to review service alternatives and tailor a service plan during the branch closure that will meet the specific needs of that neighborhood. We have been pursuing that effort in Excelsior, have reviewed a number of potential relocation sites, none of which have been suitable or available, and are now developing plans for alternate services during the closure. Please see the attached "Excelsior Interim Services Update".

Recommendation

We are recommending that the Commission adopt a strategy of providing a temporary facility for the Richmond Branch Library only and redirecting \$2,840,000 to support bond program projects. The reasons include the following:

- We are approaching the end of the site acquisition phase of the bond program, which is the phase that included the greatest unknown factors. It should be much more feasible to contain design and construction costs to estimated budgets than has been true for site acquisition. But, in order to meet the project scopes as planned, funds allocated to relocation/moving need to be redirected to bond program projects.
- The Commission could wait until the award of Proposition 14 funds in Cycle 2 and 3 are known, which could relieve some of the pressure on the bond program, but by making this decision at this time, a clear direction would be affirmed that the Commission sees as a priority completing all projects as promised to the voters in November 2000. The adoption of this strategy would potentially make funds available to address unknown situations during the life of the program as well as to possibly enhance the scope of some projects.
- A clear question of priority is presented here –is it a better investment to spend bond dollars on interim facilities or on the City’s permanent branch libraries? Staff recommends that the investment in permanent facilities should be a priority.

Attachments

Excelsior Interim Services Update 4/15/03

As a follow up to the SFPL community meeting on December 7th, the Interim Services Community Work Group (composed of community members, the Branch's CNL representatives, library/bond staff, and Supervisor Sandoval's aide) met on January 14 and March 24, 2003. The group discussed alternative sites, book- mobiles, hours at nearby branches, place for special collections, book returns, children's services, and neighborhood communication.

Alternative sites:

SFPL has considered 6 vacant storefronts:

- 4550-4564 Mission/previously Woolworth's – Art House is still seeking funds to lease space from Rite Aid. Unlikely to be ready by September.
- 4721 Mission/previously McDonalds – Interior in poor condition. Owner not interested in short term lease.
- 4750 Mission/Mission Child Care Consortium – Second floor space available though no ADA elevator. Not clear on what sort of floor load can be accommodated.
- 4760 Mission – Poor condition and monthly rent of \$9,000.
- 4575 Mission/previously a theater – Unable to contact broker or owner. Unacceptable sloped floors are usually found in theaters.
- 4430 Mission/leased by On Lok- Not available.

Bookmobiles/Book Drops:

The Library is in the process of acquiring a bookmobile to place at one site in the Excelsior 4-6 days a week and locate a book drop at the same location for 24 hour use. The following sites (in order of preference) are being considered:

- Safeway (manager's considering)
- Cala (manager's considering)
- Valente Marini Perata Funeral Home (next to Safeway)
- Balboa Park BART station
- Church/school parking lots
- A neighborhood parking spot on the street

Other branches:

A survey of Excelsior Branch users was conducted to see what other branches patrons would use during renovation. Library staff analyzed this, along with a survey on the transit of materials and is recommending opening Glen Park (the closest branch) on Monday and Sunday and letting the public know that Mission and Chinatown are already open 7 days/week.

Special Collections:

The Excelsior Branch houses a unique Filipiniana collection. The staff is surveying the collections' users as to where they would prefer to house the bulk of the collection. The results will be tallied in 2 weeks.

Children's services:

One of the priorities of the Community Work Group was to secure places to hold the Excelsior Branch library's children's programs. SFPL has talked to the directors of the Excelsior/OMI Neighborhood Beacon Center and the Excelsior Youth Center (run by the Boys & Girls Club) and they are interested in holding homework help, summer reading, and other special programs at their sites. The staff is also contacting other organizations in the neighborhood.

Communication:

At the suggestion of the Community Work Group, a ten-foot banner will be hung on the front of the branch, announcing "Branch Renovation Coming Soon." There will also be regular handouts for users on the closure timeline and hours/services at other branches. The editor of the Gateway Gazette plans to run a "countdown to closure" item regularly in the paper.