



WHITTIER CENTRAL LIBRARY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW DOES THE WHITTIER CENTRAL LIBRARY SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY?

Our local libraries are a vital community resource. Every day, young children, teens, seniors, veterans and community members of all age rely on the Whittier Central Library for assistance in applying for jobs, finishing homework, staying informed and participating in community activities.

HAS THE WHITTIER CENTRAL LIBRARY USAGE INCREASED IN RECENT YEARS?

Yes. Library usage is higher than ever and continues to grow. In fact, more than 600,000 community members of all ages visit the Central Library each year – which is significantly greater than the 55,000 annual visitors when it was built in 1959. The Library provides a safe place for local students after school, with homework centers and free tutoring. Our Veterans Resource Center supports programs for returning service members in job training, benefit navigation and job applications. Additionally, many seniors and others on fixed incomes rely on our extensive collection of books, electronic media and online databases, and regularly participate in a variety of community classes, programs and activities. Programs like story time, early childhood reading and computer instruction are popular among young children and their families.

HOW HAS THE LIBRARY USAGE CHANGED IN THE 21ST CENTURY?

Expanded computer and Internet access is crucial for residents that don't have access at home or work. Many students come to our library as it provides a safe environment for completing schoolwork, while other residents come to stay informed, apply for jobs or attend one of the many educational programs. Electronic media and online databases are well-used by community members of all ages and programs targeted for young children, teens and seniors truly make our library an important community center. The Central Library operates more than 900 programs a year that benefit Whittier residents of all ages.

WHY DOES THE WHITTIER CENTRAL LIBRARY NEED UPGRADES AND REPAIRS?

The Library was built nearly 60 years ago and is in poor condition compared to neighboring libraries. Critical repairs and upgrades are needed to bring it up to current seismic safety standards, upgrade wiring currently inadequate for modern technology and replace poor lighting. In addition, the tremendous growth in Library use means more space is needed to meet program demand and accommodate the number of residents who visit each day.

HOW WERE THE LIBRARY FACILITY NEEDS DETERMINED?

Over the course of last year, the City of Whittier worked with library programming and architecture experts to assess facility needs of the Central Library, taking into account the increases in the number of programs operated by the Library, its increase in circulation and California State Library facility standards to determine needed improvements and maintain flexibility for future use. The City Council determined that a local source of funding is needed to make the necessary repairs and upgrades to ensure the Central Library can safely meet community needs into the future.

IS THERE A PLAN TO ADDRESS THESE NEEDS AND PROVIDE MODERN FACILITIES FOR THE CENTRAL LIBRARY?

Yes. On August 8, 2017, the Whittier City voted to place Measure L, a \$22 million bond measure, on the November 7, 2017 ballot to address the Library's needs.



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HOW WOULD LOCAL FUNDING IMPROVE THE LIBRARY?

Funds from Measure L would provide locally controlled funding to:

-  Provide improved access for seniors and disabled residents
-  Expand the computer and technology center and update wiring to accommodate new technology
-  Provide a children's area with space for story times, reading with parents, book collections and age appropriate technology
-  Expand the Veterans Resource Center to improve services to veterans and their families
-  Provide an enhanced homework center with more computer workstations for students

HOW CAN WHITTIER RESIDENTS BE SURE MEASURE L FUNDS WOULD BE SPENT PROPERLY?

Measure L includes mandatory fiscal accountability provisions:

-  By law, all funds must only be used in Whittier for the Whittier Central library and cannot be taken by the State
-  Requires independent citizens' oversight committee to review expenditures and annual audits to ensure funds are spent as promised

HOW MUCH WILL MEASURE L COST?

If passed, Measure L would provide up to \$22 million dollars to upgrade and expand the Whittier Central Library. By law, the cost of the measure would be limited to no more than \$24 per \$100,000 of assessed (not market) value annually. Assessed value is generally significantly less than market value.

ARE THERE OTHER WAYS TO PAY FOR LIBRARY IMPROVEMENTS?

Measure L is part of a multi-level funding stream for the Library, which includes private donations and responsible use of City funds.

WHEN WILL MEASURE L APPEAR ON THE BALLOT?

Measure L will appear on the ballot on November 7, 2017 ballot. To pass, it must be supported by 67% of those who vote. All registered voters in the City of Whittier will be eligible to vote on this measure.