



LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY NEWS

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For Immediate Release

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Measure L Passed by Voters in March 8 Election

Library Funding Ballot Initiative Approved by 63% of Voters As of March 9

LOS ANGELES – Measure L, the Los Angeles Public Library funding initiative on the March 8 ballot, has been approved by more than 63% of the voters as of 9 a.m. Wednesday, March 9.

Measure L reverses recent devastating cuts imposed on the Los Angeles Public Library and, over the next four years, restores Library service on Mondays at all 73 libraries and seven-day service at nine libraries, along with increased access to services including the largest network of after-school programs in the city, without raising taxes. Library hours have been reduced three times in the past 12 months, and library staff has been cut by 28%, at a time when demand for library services is at record levels.

“With this resounding victory, L.A. voters reaffirmed the Los Angeles Public Library as a core—and essential—city service,” said City Librarian Martín Gómez. “Today, we celebrate this milestone in the history of our library. Tomorrow, we begin the process of planning and implementing a strategy for restoring hours and access to our vital services.”

(more)

The city charter currently guarantees the library department funding equal to .0175 % of the assessed value of all property in the city. However, in recent years, the library has been required to repay the general fund a larger portion of its overhead costs, such as water and power, security and building maintenance, severely crippling its ability to operate. Measure L changes the city charter, gradually raising the level of guaranteed funding to .03% of assessed property value over a period of four years. This increase in funding allows the department to fully reimburse the general fund for all overhead expenses, restore library service on Mondays at all 73 libraries and on Sundays at nine libraries, and purchase new books.

Measure L was supported by many individuals and organizations including: the “Yes on Libraries” campaign; Library Foundation of Los Angeles; City Councilmember Bernard Parks, who authored the measure; and councilmembers Eric Garcetti, Tom LaBonge and Jan Perry, who served on the campaign committee. It was also supported by the Board of Library Commissioners and Board President Dr. Tyree Wieder; the Librarians’ Guild and AFSCME.

The Los Angeles Public Library system includes the Central Library, 72 branches and online resources at www.lapl.org. In 2009, Los Angeles libraries were visited 17 million times, 18 million books were borrowed, and the library’s online resources were used 155 million times. The system has 6.4 million books and media, 2,300 public computers and operates Adult Literacy Centers in 21 branches.

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