

**LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD REPORT**

November 13, 2025

TO: Board of Library Commissioners

FROM: John F. Szabo, City Librarian

SUBJECT: **REQUEST TO INITIATE THE PROCESS TO CONSIDER THE
DEDICATION OF THE ECHO PARK BRANCH LIBRARY IN
RECOGNITION OF CARLOS BULOSAN**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Library Commissioners approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, That the Board of Library Commissioners initiate in accordance with Board policy 1:312, the process to consider dedicating the Echo Park Branch Library in recognition of Filipino-American novelist, poet and labor activist Carlos Bulosan, a pivotal literary figure and a powerful voice for the marginalized in America.

FINDINGS:

BACKGROUND

1. City Librarian John F. Szabo received a letter from Mayor Karen Bass on October 3, 2025 endorsing the dedication of the Echo Park Branch Library in honor of Carlos Bulosan. In her letter, Mayor Bass wrote, "there is a wide inter-generational and community support within the Filipino American community to dedicate the Echo Park Library in honor of Carlos Bulosan. Dedicating the Echo Park Library in his honor would not only be a fitting tribute to his immense contributions but also serve as a powerful symbol of Los Angeles's commitment to recognizing and celebrating the diverse tapestry of its cultural heritage."
2. Carlos Sampayan Bulosan was born in Pangasinan, Philippines in 1913. Bulosan's early life was defined by hard work and a strong desire for education, despite having limited formal schooling. Dreaming of a better life, he immigrated to the United States at the age of seventeen, where he soon encountered the harsh realities of racial discrimination and exploitation as a service worker. Mr. Bulosan faced difficult working and living conditions, taking jobs as a farm laborer, dishwasher, and cannery worker. Despite these challenges, he emerged as an important labor organizer, advocating for workers' rights and equality with an unwavering dedication to education.

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3. In 1936, Carlos Bulosan was diagnosed with tuberculosis. After contracting the disease, he was admitted to a hospital in Los Angeles where he spent the next two years undergoing operations and recovering. During the two-year recovery period he began to educate himself through reading and developed his writing.
4. In 1946, Mr. Bulosan published the autobiographical novel *America Is in the Heart*, which would become the work for which he is best remembered. In this book he depicts his experiences of growing up impoverished and economically exploited in the Philippines, followed by accounts of his experiences as an immigrant in the United States during the Great Depression. This period witnessed an estimated 150,000 to 250,000 Filipinos immigrating to America, many of whom, drawn by the promise of a better life, settled in Los Angeles. Bulosan's narrative captures the dreams, struggles, and resilience of an entire generation, providing insight into an important chapter of American history.
5. By the late 1940s, Carlos Bulosan had risen from a laborer to an internationally recognized writer and activist. A self-educated thinker, he used his work to expose the injustices faced by Filipino American immigrants and to advocate for equality and civil rights. Bulosan's legacy continues to inspire Filipino and Asian American communities and reflects the library's mission to honor voices that champion knowledge, inclusion, and education.
6. The Echo Park Branch Library serves the Historic Filipinotown community.
7. The criteria and procedure for recognition in branch facilities is stated in Board Policy 1:312.
To acknowledge citizen involvement and contributions to branch libraries, the Board of Library Commissioners may recognize individuals or organizations that have made substantial efforts or donations to enhance and improve library services in the Los Angeles Public Library:
 - A. *for the dedication of a branch library may be accepted and processed in accordance with the following requirements:*
 1. *A written recommendation must be submitted to the Board of Library Commissioners to include a justification for the proposed dedication.*
 2. *The justification shall include the person's prominent contributions to humanity, to the city, to the library, or to the community, and should demonstrate that the character and achievements of the individual set standards of excellence, served as a role model, and reflected the principles and ideals of American democracy, its diversity and plurality.*

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3. *The recommendation shall be posted in the libraries and on the library Website for three months for review and the opportunity for comments by the public.*
 4. *Library staff will evaluate the recommendation and community input in a report to the Board of Library Commissioners for its consideration of the request.*
 - B. *The Board of Library Commissioners may name a community meeting room or area of the branch in honor or in memory of an individual, and approve the design and the placement of a plaque with the individual's name. Recommendations for naming a community meeting room or area of the library may be accepted and processed in accordance with the procedures in 1:312 A above.*
8. Library staff recommends initiating the process to consider dedicating the Echo Park Branch Library in recognition of Carlos Bulosan.

Prepared by: John F. Szabo, City Librarian

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2025 - XX (C-XX)

WHEREAS, City Librarian John F. Szabo received a letter from Mayor Karen Bass on October 3, 2025 endorsing the dedication of the Echo Park Branch Library in honor of Carlos Bulosan; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bulosan immigrated to the United States at the age of seventeen, where he soon encountered the harsh realities of racial discrimination and exploitation as a service worker. Despite these challenges, emerged as an important labor organizer, advocating for workers' rights and equality with an unwavering dedication to education; and

WHEREAS, By the late 1940s, Mr. Bulosan had risen from a laborer to an internationally recognized writer and activist. A self-educated thinker, he used his work to expose the injustices faced by Filipino American immigrants and to advocate for equality and civil rights.

WHEREAS, Bulosan's legacy continues to inspire Filipino and Asian American communities and reflects the library's mission to honor voices that champion knowledge, inclusion, and social justice; and

WHEREAS, The Echo Park Branch Library serves the Historic Filipinotown community.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Library Commissioners initiate, in accordance with Board policy 1:312, the process to consider dedicating the Echo Park Branch Library in recognition of Filipino-American novelist, poet and labor activist Carlos Bulosan.

This is a true copy:

Lynda Achi
Board Executive Assistant

Adopted by the following votes:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT: