

**LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD REPORT**

April 9, 2026

TO: Board of Library Commissioners

FROM: John F. Szabo, City Librarian

SUBJECT: **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 dedicate 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. On November 13, 2025, the Board of Library Commissioners unanimously approved a recommendation to initiate the process of dedication of the Echo Park Branch in recognition of Carlos Bulosan. Following this approval, a public announcement of the solicitation and process was made, inviting the community to provide comments during a 90-day solicitation period.
2. 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."
3. The Board of Library Commissioners received a total of 121 comments, all in support of the dedication of the Echo Park Branch in recognition of Carlos Bulosan. Almost all the submissions touched on his importance to the Filipino-American community in Echo Park.

- “Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are the fabric of our LA Communities, yet we feel isolated because we have no representation. I hope by acknowledging our accomplishments as individuals we can inspire the next.” – Dr. Sara Pol-Lim (community member)
- “Let’s preserve those early contributors and literary footprints of Filipino immigrants who contributed to the canning and agricultural industries. Renaming the library makes these historic moments visible.” – Proserfina Abarquez-Delacruz, J.D. (Former L.A. City Civil Service Commissioner)
- “I am a Filipina American born and raised in Los Angeles, and an educator who taught in Historic Filipinotown. I strongly believe that this dedication would be one that strengthens the community’s pride in the power of learning and in the history of Los Angeles.” – Czarina Jimenez (community member)
- “Bulosan’s works embody and symbolize that wisdom borne from the struggles of workers to vindicate their dignity and freedom. Congratulations to all who made this historic achievement possible.” – Professor E. San Juan Jr. (community member)
- “A wonderful plan to commemorate a Filipino American historical figure.” – Marissa Aroy (community member)
- “On behalf of the Filipino American National Historical Society (FANHS), I write in wholehearted support of the initiative to honor Carlos Bulosan - an enduring voice of conscience whose life and work profoundly shaped Filipino American history and made indelible contributions to the canon of American literature.” – Romeo Obrador Garcia (Filipino American National Historical Society Inaugural National Director)
- “I believe this dedication would be a powerful statement of inclusion and a fitting tribute to a man who spent his life fighting for the dignity of all people.” - Nina Sevilla (Echo Park Neighborhood Council; Levitt Los Angeles Board Member)
- “As a Filipino American, I am grateful to the Board of Library Commissioners for dedicating the Echo Park Branch Library in honor of Carlos Bulosan. By this gesture, we, immigrants from the Philippines, also feel honored...” – Adrienne Servillas Cedro Hament (community member)
- “Dedicating the library will inspire not only Filipino Americans but the entire immigrant community - especially the youth - to strive for the betterment of the City of Los Angeles.” – Aquilina Soriano Versoza (Executive Director, Pilipino Workers Center of Southern California)
- “Through his essays, poetry, and *America Is in the Heart*, Bulosan gave voice to generations whose labor helped shape the social and economic fabric of Los Angeles.” – Maurus Dumalaog (Chair, Historic Filipinotown Coalition)
- “Bulosan has deep ties to Los Angeles, where he lived, worked, and organized for labor rights, and spent countless hours at the Los Angeles Public Library developing the voice that shaped his most influential writings, highlighting his enduring significance to the city and its Filipino community. Therefore the Echo Park Neighborhood Council supports the Board of Library Commissioners efforts to dedicate the Echo Park Branch Library in Honor of Carlos Bulosan.” – Echo Park Neighborhood Council
- “The Echo Park community has long been home to immigrants, workers, artists, and families seeking opportunity and belonging. Dedicating this branch library to Carlos Bulosan meaningfully reflects that history and affirms the Library’s role as a public institution committed to equity, access, and cultural inclusion.” – Pilipino American Los Angeles

Democrats (PALAD)

- “A dedication to Carlos Bulosan will further galvanize the importance, visibility and recognition of the contributions of Filipino Americans in our beautiful city.” – Kimmy Maniquis (Executive Director, Search to Involve Filipino Americans [SIPA])
 - “This dedication allows young people - especially from immigrant families - to see themselves reflected in a public institution devoted to learning and opportunity.” – Jaime Geaga, PA, MPH (Chair, Carlos Bulosan Book Club; Board Treasurer, Friends of Echo Park Library; Commissioner, East LA Area Planning Commission)
 - “It would be most appropriate and significant to dedicate the Echo Park branch of the Los Angeles Public Library system to Carlos Bulosan. It would not only honor an unsung hero in Asian American and California history, but will also signal the commitment of the City of Los Angeles to the values of equity and cultural inclusion.” – Karen Umemoto, Ph.D. (Helen and Morgan Chu Chair and Director, Asian American Studies Center, University of California, Los Angeles [UCLA])
 - “Bulosan’s literary and civic legacy stands as a profound testament to the enduring contributions of Filipino Americans and immigrant communities to the participatory, cultural, and intellectual life of Los Angeles.” – Ethel G. Rubio (Commissioner, Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission)
 - “Bulosan’s work powerfully confronts the injustices he experienced firsthand as a Filipino immigrant laborer, including racism, exploitation, and the fight for dignity through labor organizing and collective action.” – Councilmember Ysabel Jurado (Los Angeles City Council, Fourteenth District, City of Los Angeles)
 - “On behalf of Los Angeles Council District 1, I am writing to express strong support for the December 2025 resolution adopted by the Los Angeles Library Commission to dedicate the Echo Park Library Branch in honor of Carlos Bulosan. Naming this facility after such a foundational figure is a significant act of cultural preservation for the Historic Filipinotown community.” – Eunisses Hernandez (Los Angeles City Councilmember, District 1)
 - “Dedicating the Echo Park Branch Library in honor of Carlos Bulosan would be a fitting tribute to his legacy and would affirm Los Angeles’ commitment to celebrating the diversity of its cultural heritage. Serving the Historic Filipinotown community, the branch is a particularly appropriate location for this dedication – Adelio Angelito S. Cruz (Consul General, Philippines)
 - “Carlos Bulosan was my great-uncle, and I serve as the representative of the Estate of Carlos Bulosan, entrusted with preserving and safeguarding his legacy. As Carlos spent countless hours at the Los Angeles Main Library, it would be a profound honor to see his name commemorated at the Echo Park Branch Library - a place that continues the very mission he cherished: access to knowledge, opportunity, and public belonging.” – Laveta Bulosan Gentile (Estate of Carlos Bulosan)
4. 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.

5. 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.
6. In 1946, Mr. Bulosan published the semi-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.
7. 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.
8. The Echo Park Branch Library serves the Historic Filipinotown community.
9. 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.

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.

10. The City Librarian recommends the dedication of the Echo Park Branch Library in recognition of Carlos Bulosan.

Prepared by: Joyce Cooper, Director of Branch Library Services

LIBRARY RESOLUTION NO. 2026 - 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; and

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; and

WHEREAS, On November 13, 2025 the Board of Library Commissioners initiated, in accordance with Board policy 1:312, the process to consider dedicating the Echo Park Branch Library in recognition of Carlos Bulosan; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Library Commissioners received a total of 121 comments, all in support of the dedication of the Echo Park Branch Library in recognition of Carlos Bulosan; and

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

This is a true copy:

Lynda Achi
Secretary to the Board

Adopted by the following votes:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT: