



# Budget Public Engagement Report

Fiscal Year 2025





City of Austin  
**2024-25  
BUDGET**

# **African American Resource Advisory Commission**

**African American Resource Advisory Commission  
FY 25 Budget Recommendations**

Elaina Fowler, Chair (District 10)

Charelle Vanbrakle, Vice Chair (District 4)

**Budget Recommendation #1**

Austin Public Library Black Literature Expansion: \$1.5M

**Justification:**

The current political climate has had a detrimental impact on youth who seek to connect with and learn from their cultural heritage through literature. This issue is particularly evident in the realm of African American authors and their works, which shed light on the struggles and experiences of African American communities. Public libraries are an integral part of our society, nurturing the minds of future generations. As Public Schools continue to reclaim their library autonomy it is vital Austin Public libraries expand their catalog to educate and inspire all individuals through the power of cultural reading.

Public libraries serve as a vital resource for African American communities, offering summer reading programs and access to culturally specific literature and media. Therefore, the insufficient amount of African American literature in Austin Public Libraries would be a disservice to African Americans residing within the city limits and to all who have the curiosity to embrace diversity and learn from their stories. Investing in culturally significant African American literature would be a positive step for the Austin Public Library system, reinforcing Austin's commitment to inclusivity and diversity by addressing challenging topics such as institutional racism and implicit bias.

It is essential for the City of Austin to increase the budget of the Austin Public Library beyond the zero-based budget to support a meaningful investment in African American literature within the library's collection. This investment would not only benefit the African American community but also underscore Austin's dedication to embracing diversity and promoting equitable access to valuable literary resources.

## Budget Recommendation #6

Establish an Austin Texas Poet Laureate Program: \$50,000 (per Annum)

### Justification:

Since the 1600's, poet laureate positions have existed in cities, states, and countries to be stewards of poetry in their communities through programs that positively impact the public. As of 2022, Austin is the only major city in Texas without a Poet Laureate program, and we, the undersigned, are of the belief that Austin could benefit from a socio-politically engaged Poet Laureate who uses poetry to promote literacy across the city and to integrate poetry into the fabric of Austin's history, politics, and culture.

According to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, Texas ranks 42nd among states supporting artists in the US. As of 2003, 121,074 adults in Central Texas either cannot read or struggle with reading. For decades, many local organizations have created and nurtured Austin's poetry scene with little to no budget and recognition, yet, University of Texas at Austin has one of the most nationally recognized MFA programs, and Austin markets itself as a mecca for Texas arts. Having a poet laureate program would keep Austin accountable to its promise of being the arts center of Texas and assist with improving Austin's literacy rate. Also, local poets deserve an opportunity to shine.

An adult Poet Laureate program has the potential to inspire Austin residents to read and write; to celebrate Austin's literary scene; to nurture and amplify Austin-based poets of all ages through performances, teaching, and public speaking; and to create new ways of understanding Austin's policies and culture via poems written by the Poet Laureate. We, the undersigned, call on Austin City Council to please do the following:

- Pass a resolution that makes Austin Poet Laureate an official city program run by the Austin Public Library and provides Austin Public Library the authority to choose a Poet Laureate.
- Allow Austin Public Library to establish a City Poet Laureate Committee that includes a representative of the library, a representative of the arts commission, and members of the city's literature community. The City Poet Laureate Committee will give input on the structure of the poet laureate position, review applications, and recommend City Poet Laureate nominees to the head of the public library.



**Board & Commission:** African American Resource Advisory Commission  
**Recommendation Title:** FY 25 Budget Recommendations

**Recommendation:** Austin Public Library Literature Expansion

**Department Name:** Library

**Does the Department support the recommendation?** Yes

FY 2023-24 funding amount (if any): \$7,009,958 - Total Materials Budget

FY 2024-25 funding amount: \$7,208,572 - Total Materials Budget

The Library Department's proposed materials budget for FY 2024-25 includes an increase of \$198,614 to meet community demand and rising content costs, especially the high cost of eBooks. Additional funding is necessary to expand the Library Department's collection of African-American literature and materials for other underrepresented communities, including people of color and LGBTQ+.



**Board & Commission:** African American Resource Advisory Commission  
**Recommendation Title:** FY 25 Budget Recommendations

**Recommendation:** Establish an Austin Texas Poet Laureate Program

**Department Name:** Library

**Does the Department support the recommendation?** Yes

FY 2023-24 funding amount (if any): \$0

FY 2024-25 funding amount: \$0

City Council Resolution No. 20240502-093, approved on May 2, 2024, directed the City Manager to establish an adult Poet Laureate program to be housed in and managed by the Austin Public Library department or other Department deemed appropriate by the City Manager. The department is supportive of the recommendation. Additional funding is required to implement the program.



# Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission



## HISPANIC/LATINO QUALITY OF LIFE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION 20240326-8

### Supporting Early Childhood Education and Development Funding

Date: March 26, 2024

Subject: FY24 Budget Recommendations

Motioned By: Commissioner Perales

Seconded By: Commissioner Castañeda

#### Recommendation

Early childhood educators, caregivers and parents of young children deserve livable wages and affordable childcare: the two are not mutually exclusive. Local governments are crucial to investing/highlighting early childhood educators especially when state and federal governments are not. Childcare is a public good, it is economic infrastructure.

#### Description of Recommendation to Council

- \$1.5 M Austin Public Health multi-year allocation to Early Childhood Education and Development funding:
  - \$500,000 Early childhood education and development scholarships
    - Directly dispersed to childcare centers & registered licensed to support parents with high needs
  - \$500,000 Pilot early childhood mini-grants providing emergency financial relief for home-based licensed providers and Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers; Center Based Care
  - Earmark \$250,000 to fund a future contract with a qualified nonprofit, selected through a competitive bidding process, to provide health insurance support and ACA website navigation assistance, specifically for the early childhood workforce. Support specific to Early Childhood providers can include, but is not limited to:
    - Education on required documentation
    - Ability to schedule appointments with Early Childhood providers when they are available
  - \$250,000 to establish a no-cost lending library & EC resource center for child care providers and families (toys, curriculum, technology, etc) available at APH Neighborhood Centers and APL branch libraries.
- Recommend updating the eligibility focus to include home-based childcare providers (licensed and FFN).

## **Rationale**

The cost of childcare is one of the biggest expenses families face. It is a daunting task to find affordable, high quality childcare. According to UT News, “The average cost for infant care in Texas is \$777 per month, or \$9,324 per year — nearly 14% of the state’s median household income of \$67,321 and more expensive than a year of in-state tuition at a four-year public college.” Every child in Austin should be able to access high quality childcare without causing financial strain on the family.

Childcare providers may encounter financial burdens that make it difficult for them to provide services on a consistent basis. Unexpected issues can derail childcare services. It can take time to navigate insurance claims while continuing to try and run a business. There are times the home-based childcare center may have to close as a result of the issues/damage. Emergency financial relief for home-based licensed providers and Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers can prevent childcare providers from losing income. This provides stability for the childcare provider, and they no longer fear the possibility of having to close their business, which in turn also provides stability for the family utilizing their services.

According to UT News, “Texas child care workers earn poverty-level wages, with an average wage of \$12 per hour.” Childcare providers are already struggling financially, and they may not have access to health insurance. Providers may have to pay for health insurance through the marketplace, which can be a difficulty to navigate. Childcare providers benefit from health insurance support and ACA website navigation assistance.

FFN caregivers represent communities that are disconnected from resources. A no-cost lending library and early childhood resource center for child care providers and families (toys, curriculum, technology, etc) gives providers the ability to access items they may not be able to afford on their own.

Eligibility should focus to include home-based childcare providers (licensed and FFN). Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers include grandparents, aunts, family friends and neighbors. They are the mainstay of the child care sector. Spanish-speaking parents prefer home-based care to center care. The FFN workforce is 97% women and 50% people of color (compared to 40% of color among licensed child care workers) and the FFN workforce is overrepresented by immigrants.

### **Vote: 6-2**

For: Commissioner Castañeda, Commissioner Silva, Commissioner Afifi, Commissioner Perales, Commissioner Galvan, Commissioner Jackson Jr.

Against: None

Abstain: Commissioner Neri, Commissioner Vargas

Absent: Commissioner May, Commissioner Maldonado

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amanda Afifi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Amanda Afifi, Chair

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Family, Friend and Neighbor Child Care: Supporting Diverse Families and Thriving Economies - <https://homegrownchildcare.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/HomeGrown-Supporting-Diverse-Families-Thriving-Economies-final-6.2.22.pdf>

UT News Texas Continues To Face Child Care Accessibility Crisis - <https://news.utexas.edu/2024/03/20/texas-continues-to-face-child-care-accessibility-crisis/>



**Board & Commission:** Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission

**Recommendation Title:** Supporting Early Childhood Education and Development Funding

**Recommendation:** \$1.5 M Austin Public Health multi-year allocation to Early Childhood Education and Development funding:

- \$500,000 Early childhood education and development scholarships
- \$500,000 Pilot early childhood mini-grants providing emergency financial relief for home-based licensed providers and Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers; Center Based Care
- Earmark \$250,000 to fund a future contract with a qualified nonprofit, selected through a competitive bidding process, to provide health insurance support and ACA website navigation assistance, specifically for the early childhood workforce.
- \$250,000 to establish a no-cost lending library & EC resource center for childcare providers and families (toys, curriculum, technology, etc) available at APH Neighborhood Centers and APL branch libraries.
- Recommend updating the eligibility focus to include home-based childcare providers (licensed and FFN)

**Department Name:** Austin Public Health

*Response pending*



# Joint Inclusion Committee



## JOINT INCLUSION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 20240327-20

### Supporting Early Childhood Education and Development Funding

Date: March 27, 2024

Subject: FY24 Budget Recommendations

Motioned By: Commissioner Afifi

Seconded By: Commissioner Bondi

#### Recommendation

Early childhood educators, caregivers and parents of young children deserve livable wages and affordable childcare: the two are not mutually exclusive. Local governments are crucial to investing/highlighting early childhood educators especially when state and federal governments are not. Childcare is a public good, it is economic infrastructure.

#### Description of Recommendation to Council

- \$1.5 M Austin Public Health multi-year allocation to Early Childhood Education and Development funding:
  - \$500,000 Early childhood education and development scholarships
    - Directly dispersed to childcare centers & registered licensed to support parents with high needs
  - \$500,000 Pilot early childhood mini-grants providing emergency financial relief for home-based licensed providers and Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers; Center Based Care
  - Earmark \$250,000 to fund a future contract with a qualified nonprofit, selected through a competitive bidding process, to provide health insurance support and ACA website navigation assistance, specifically for the early childhood workforce. Support specific to Early Childhood providers can include, but is not limited to:
    - Education on required documentation
    - Ability to schedule appointments with Early Childhood providers when they are available
  - \$250,000 to establish a no-cost lending library & EC resource center for child care providers and families (toys, curriculum, technology, etc) available at APH Neighborhood Centers and APL branch libraries.
- Recommend updating the eligibility focus to include home-based childcare providers (licensed and FFN).

## **Rationale**

The cost of childcare is one of the biggest expenses families face. It is a daunting task to find affordable, high quality childcare. According to UT News, “The average cost for infant care in Texas is \$777 per month, or \$9,324 per year — nearly 14% of the state’s median household income of \$67,321 and more expensive than a year of in-state tuition at a four-year public college.” Every child in Austin should be able to access high quality childcare without causing financial strain on the family.

Childcare providers may encounter financial burdens that make it difficult for them to provide services on a consistent basis. Unexpected issues can derail childcare services. It can take time to navigate insurance claims while continuing to try and run a business. There are times the home-based childcare center may have to close as a result of the issues/damage. Emergency financial relief for home-based licensed providers and Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers can prevent childcare providers from losing income. This provides stability for the childcare provider, and they no longer fear the possibility of having to close their business, which in turn also provides stability for the family utilizing their services.

According to UT News, “Texas child care workers earn poverty-level wages, with an average wage of \$12 per hour.” Childcare providers are already struggling financially, and they may not have access to health insurance. Providers may have to pay for health insurance through the marketplace, which can be a difficulty to navigate. Childcare providers benefit from health insurance support and ACA website navigation assistance.

FFN caregivers represent communities that are disconnected from resources. A no-cost lending library and early childhood resource center for child care providers and families (toys, curriculum, technology, etc) gives providers the ability to access items they may not be able to afford on their own.

Eligibility should focus to include home-based childcare providers (licensed and FFN). Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers include grandparents, aunts, family friends and neighbors. They are the mainstay of the child care sector. Spanish-speaking parents prefer home-based care to center care. The FFN workforce is 97% women and 50% people of color (compared to 40% of color among licensed child care workers) and the FFN workforce is overrepresented by immigrants.

### **Vote: 8-0**

For: Commissioner Sin, Commissioner Afifi, Commissioner Fontanesi, Commissioner Bondi, Commissioner Ortega, Commissioner Curry, Commissioner Powell, Commissioner Austen

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Early Childhood Council - Commissioners Vargas and Gordon, Human Rights Commission - Commissioners Davis and Aslam

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amanda Afifi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Amanda Afifi, Chair

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Family, Friend and Neighbor Child Care: Supporting Diverse Families and Thriving Economies - <https://homegrownchildcare.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/HomeGrown-Supporting-Diverse-Families-Thriving-Economies-final-6.2.22.pdf>

UT News Texas Continues To Face Child Care Accessibility Crisis - <https://news.utexas.edu/2024/03/20/texas-continues-to-face-child-care-accessibility-crisis/>



**Board & Commission:** Joint Inclusion Committee

**Recommendation Title:** Budget Recommendation Regarding Current Early Childhood Investments

**Recommendation:** Maintain all current investments in early childhood programs and infrastructure

**Department Name:** Economic Development Department

**Does the Department support the recommendation?** Yes

FY 2023-24 funding amount (if any): \$3,092,831

FY 2024-25 funding amount: \$3,092,831

Funding for KinderCare at Bergstrom Tech's Lease is maintained as recommended.

There are no changes in City support for social service contract funding for Family Connects, Maternal Infant Outreach Program (MIOP), and Women Infants Children (WIC) program.

The Economic Development Department will provide an update to Council on the development of the childcare grant program for qualifying childcare operations in July 2024.



# Library Commission



## LIBRARY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION 20240226-5

Date: 02/26/2024

Subject: Improving library safety and holistic services for library patrons

**Motioned By:** Commissioner Davis

**Seconded By:** Vice Chair Infante Huerta

### **Recommendation**

Provide two (2) FTE or contract Social Work positions and three (3) Security positions to the Austin Public Library department to be managed by Library personnel.

*[Brief description of the Board's recommendation]*

### **Description of Recommendation to Council**

Requesting that the Austin City Council use their authority to amend the FTE policy around Social Work titles and support the relevant ~\$419,000 budget increase needed to add new positions.

### **Rationale**

Austin Public Library facilities represent some of the only places in the city of Austin where people can go daily and stay for long periods of time. The library's operational needs are unique and evolving, especially considering the rapid change in the city. City Council and other City of Austin departments recognize the critical role that our libraries play in nurturing and strengthening the safety for all residents as evidenced by the City Council's 2019 expansion of the Safe Place program for LGBTQIA+ residents extending to the Austin Public Libraries. The presence of social workers and security personnel enhances the library by making it a safer place for residents to connect the resources they may need.

With limited shelters in the most populous parts of the city, the library is sometimes the only safe place our unhoused neighbors can go where they are welcomed in for free. The library is also often used as a warming or cooling shelter for all Austin residents during times of extreme temperatures that are occurring more and more frequently.

In response and shared responsibility to library customers and residents we must be aware of these evolving needs of the communities and seek combined solutions. The library currently has partnerships with Austin Public Health and with other community-based providers of wraparound services to help address some of the gaps but they are limited in scope and are present in a few library locations for short increments of time. The library commission has heard from members of the public, staff, and library leadership and we feel that the current model is not sufficient or sustainable.

Social Workers in public libraries is a growing trend across the United States and many large cities have found the addition of social workers to library staff to be integral to the delivery of day-to-day services. Many library patrons are coming in with multiple needs that require specialized training. Issues of housing insecurities, mental health, substance abuse and medical assistance needs are complex. Addressing these complex issues are beyond the scope of most Library Workers' training and job descriptions and places undue pressure and responsibility on them.

The libraries experience ongoing security challenges especially at the Terrazas, Little Walnut Creek, Ruiz, Menchaca, and Central locations. A new trend in incidents at the North Village, Spicewood Springs and Willie Mae Kirk branches has arisen as well. Additional Security Services positions are needed to provide more dedicated staff to each branch. These positions respond to incidents such as:

1. abusive, indecent, profane, or vulgar language,
2. disrupting use of library services or property,
3. vandalism, theft, or damage to property,
4. and harassment, sexual harassment, abuse, threats, or fights.

These new positions are needed to work collaboratively with social workers to determine the appropriate de-escalation needed to ensure that Austin's libraries are safe and welcoming for all.

## References

- [Social Workers and Librarians](#) - American Library Association
  - [Why US Libraries are on the Frontlines of the Homelessness Crisis](#) - The Guardian
  - [Colorado librarians are now front-line crisis workers, managing homeless patrons, mental illness, book-banners](#) - Greeley Tribune
  - [Salt Lake City downtown library's new social worker has already helped thousands](#) - The Salt Lake Tribune
  - [The Changing Role of Libraries: How Social Workers Can Help](#) - The Journal of Contemporary Social Services
- 

**Vote:** 7-0-0-1

For: Vice-Chair Infante Huerta, Commissioners Rosenthal, Mehta, Davis, Herrera Moreno, Frayjo, Masters

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: Commissioner DeRosa

Attest:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
*Laura Polio, Library Commission Staff Liaison*



## **LIBRARY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION 20240429-3**

### **Establish an Adult Poet Laureate Program for the City of Austin**

**Date:** April 29, 2024

**Subject:** Establishing an adult Poet Laureate program to be managed by the Austin Public Library

**Motioned By:** Commissioner Mehta

**Seconded By:** Vice Chair Infante Huerta

#### **Recommendation**

Establish an adult Poet Laureate program for the City of Austin to be housed and managed by the Austin Public Library Department.

#### **Description of Recommendation to Council**

Requesting that the Austin City Council use their authority to direct the City Manager to establish an adult Poet Laureate program to be housed in and managed by the Austin Public Library department, and add additional budget funds as needed to create and support this program.

#### **Rationale:**

The City of Austin is known for its love and celebration of the arts. For decades many local organizations have developed Austin's poetry scene. Additionally, the University of Texas at Austin is a nationally recognized Masters of Fine Arts program that nurtures and produces many wonderful artists and poets.

Poet Laureate positions have existed in cities, states and countries since the 1600s, and are designed to be stewards of poetry, art and storytelling. Austin is the only major city in Texas without an adult Poet Laureate program. An adult Poet Laureate can use this role to promote literacy across the city, use poetry to engage with Austin's history, politics and culture, as well as continue to grow and support Austin's community of artists, with the potential to amplify Austin poets of all ages.

Austin Public Library is a natural home for a program like this. A Poet Laureate has the potential to encourage via performances, teaching and public speaking the importance of reading, writing and literacy. Reading and information literacy are core to the library's mission and the library is a well known and trusted institution in the city. According to Literacy Texas, Texas ranks 46/50 for adult literacy. The adult literacy rate is 81%, with 19% of adults lacking basic prose literacy skills. Creating this program can help close the gap, and inspire Austin residents to read and write. Austin Public Library has branches strategically located across the city and is accustomed to creating programs and events across all of its branches allowing for maximum impact for this new program. They have also proven to be good stewards of city funds, and have many collection, personnel and budget needs to consider. We ask that you also provide financial support to create and sustain this much needed program so this does not impact the facilities, programs and projects already underway across the library department.

**Record of the Vote: 8-0-0-1**

For: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Infante Huerta, Commissioners Davis, DeRosa, Herrera Moreno,  
Mehta, Frayjo, Davis

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioner Masters

Attest:   
*Laura Polio, Library Commission Staff Liaison*



**LIBRARY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION # 20240325-3  
Support for Austin Public Library FY25 Budget**

**Date:** March 25, 2024

**Subject:** Support for Austin Public Library FY25 Budget

**Motioned By:** Commissioner Masters

**Seconded By:** Vice Chair Infante Huerta

**Recommendation**

Support for Austin Public Library's proposed budget for FY2025 with additional funding for unmet needs around books and materials, social workers, security and custodial positions, feasibility studies, and enhanced library cards.

**Description of Recommendation to Council**

Requesting that the Austin City Council approve the proposed Austin Public Library budget for FY2025. Additionally, increased funding is requested for an increase of 6% to the books and materials budget, the addition of two, (2) FTE social worker positions, three, (3) FTE of additional security and three (3) FTE of additional custodial positions, \$1.5 million for feasibility studies of new and expanded facilities, and the expansion of the enhanced library card initiative.

**Rationale:**

In FY 2023, the Austin Public Library completed a year-long strategic planning process to shape the work of the library for years to come. Input was provided for the plan through a community survey that received more than 5,400 responses, pop-up community events in 20 locations throughout Austin, as well as a series of surveys, workshops, and listening sessions with APL staff and external community stakeholders. The Austin Public Library Comprehensive Library Strategic and Facilities Plan, adopted by the City Council in March 2023, lays out new strategic goals for the Austin Public Library, aligned with the City of Austin's Imagine Austin 30-year strategic plan and the SD28 5-year strategic plan.

Our recommended budget provides Austin Public Library with the resources needed to advance the five strategic goals laid out in that plan document, as well as to achieve the Library's new Mission Statement: "Inspiring all to discover, learn, and create."

The proposed budget includes a 3% increase in the budget for materials, including digital materials, subscriptions, and databases. Austin's population growth, and the increased cost of materials – especially e-books, which represent a fast-growing share of APL's circulation and require expensive licenses. These proposed increases are necessary to keep up with inflation but do not represent a growth budget and may, in fact, lead to a reduction of e-resources and increased patron wait times to access materials. An additional 3% increase for a total of 6% to the books and materials budget would help close the gap. The Commission also supports funding the listed unmet needs of the library.

While the Library has generally recovered from the pandemic and the resulting diminishment of services and capacity, the staff now face new challenges resulting from post-pandemic societal pressures. Every day throughout the library system, staff assist Austinites who are experiencing homelessness, in need of warming or cooling stations, or coping with complex problems of substance abuse, mental health, and medical assistance. Many library patrons have multiple needs that require specialized training and some library visitors can be obstreperous, abusive, or violent. While the Library is ready and willing to assist these persons and can provide a valuable link to vital services, staff need support in the form of social workers, security, and custodial staff, to assist with training and preparation in how to handle these situations and ensure that libraries remains safe and clean for everyone.

While the Commission supports all funding requested by library staff in the FY 2025 budget, the Commission is especially interested in increased funding for the following projects:

- Funding increase of 6% to the materials budget
- Additional funding to support 2 FTE of social worker positions and 3 FTE of additional security and 3 FTE of additional custodial positions
- Funding of \$1.5 million for feasibility studies for new and expanded facilities to meet the infrastructure objectives contained in the strategic planning process completed in 2023
- Expansion of the highly successful Enhanced Library Card initiative.

**Vote: 6-0-0-3**

For: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Infante Huerta, Commissioners Davis, DeRosa, Herrera Moreno, Masters

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioners Frayjo, Mehta, Rosenthal

Attest:   
Laura Polio, Library Commission Staff Liaison



**Board & Commission:** Library Commission

**Recommendation Title:** Improving library safety and holistic services for library patrons

**Recommendation:** Provide two (2) FTE or contract Social Work positions and three (3) Security positions to the Austin Public Library department to be managed by Library personnel.

**Department Name:** Library

**Does the Department support the recommendation?** Yes

The Library Department is supportive of this recommendation and recognizes the importance of providing professional support to staff members dealing with customer issues related to housing insecurities, mental health, substance abuse, and medical assistance needs. However, implementing this recommendation would require additional funding beyond our current resources.



**Board & Commission:** Library Commission

**Recommendation Title:** Support for Austin Public Library FY25 Budget

**Recommendation:**

- Increased funding is requested for an increase of 6% to the books and materials budget
- The addition of two, (2) FTE social worker positions
- Three additional security positions and three additional custodial positions
- \$1.5 million for feasibility studies of new and expanded facilities, and the expansion of the enhanced library card initiative

**Department Name:** Library

**Does the Department support the recommendation?** Yes

Books & Materials – The Library Department’s proposed budget for FY25 includes a 3% increase of \$198,614. The higher rate of increase would be used towards increase in demand, as well as cost, for library materials which also includes digital materials, hotspots, subscriptions, and databases.

Enhanced Library Card initiative – The Library Department has completed the expansion of the enhanced library cards.

Social Workers, Library Security Specialists, Building & Grounds Assistants, and Feasibility Studies – The Library Department will need additional funding to implement changes outside of current resources.



**Board & Commission:** Library Commission

**Recommendation Title:** Poet Laureate Program

**Recommendation:** Requesting that the Austin City Council use their authority to direct the City Manager to establish an adult Poet Laureate program to be housed in and managed by the Austin Public Library department and add additional budget funds as needed to create and support this program.

**Department Name:** Library

**Does the Department support the recommendation?** Yes

City Council Resolution No. 20240502-093, approved on May 2, 2024, directed the City Manager to establish an adult Poet Laureate program to be housed in and managed by the Austin Public Library department or other Department deemed appropriate by the City Manager. The department is supportive of the recommendation and will require additional funding to implement the program.