



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

Date: March 13, 2026

Recommendation Number 20260313-006

Subject: Budget Recommendation to the City Council Regarding Far Southeast Library Branch Site Selection

Motioned By: Vice Chair Chang

Seconded By: Chair Kelly

WHEREAS, the current Southeast Branch Library is undersized for community demand. The need for a full-service Far Southeast Branch Library is grounded first and foremost in (1) long-standing neighborhood need, (2) obligations to historically underserved residents, and (3) the necessity of accessible, community-serving infrastructure where families already live;

WHEREAS, for people with disabilities, libraries are essential access infrastructure—providing assistive technology, inclusive programming, safe indoor space, and digital connectivity. A Far Southeast Branch must be planned with accessibility from the beginning, which requires immediate investment in site selection and predevelopment; and

WHEREAS, funding site selection and predevelopment is needed so the community can begin shared investment and fundraising.

WHEREAS, the new library should have digital accessibility and assistive technology including computers with screen readers; accessible printers and adaptive equipment; and free internet access for households without reliable service.

WHEREAS, the new library should be a safe, climate-controlled public space that can serve as a cooling center; provide a safe daytime space; and serve as a refuge for medically vulnerable residents.

WHEREAS, the new library should have inclusive learning and programming including sensory-friendly story times; accessible teen spaces; adult literacy and lifelong learning; and community classes without cost barriers.

WHEREAS, the new library should encourage employment and independence through job applications and workforce training; benefits navigation; and quiet, inclusive workspaces.

WHEREAS, the new library should encourage social connection and community belonging.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities encourages the Austin City Council to allocate \$500,000 for site selection and predevelopment of the Far Southeast Branch Library. The \$500,000 should include digital access and assistive technology; safe, climate-controlled public space; inclusive learning and programming; and social connection and community belonging.

Date of Approval: March 13, 2026

Record of the vote: 7-0

For: Chair Kelly, Vice Chair Chang, Commissioners: Arellano, Comer-HaGans, Murphy, San Martin, and Slade

Against: None

Absent: Commissioner Vassallo

Attest: *Nekaybaw Watson*, Staff Liaison