

Tuesday, March 17 : All San Jose Public Libraries are closed to the public until further notice. Learn more here. ([/blog/keeping-you-informed](#))

Wednesday, April 8 : Due to our temporary closures, we are currently not accepting book donations at any location.

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Library Parcel Tax



The San José Public Library plays a critical role in our community and is funded through a variety of revenue sources that include the voter-approved Library Parcel Tax, an annual special tax on parcels of land, the City of San José General Fund and Construction & Conveyance Tax. Collectively they provide funds for education services and programs, new books and media and public technology for customers.

Overview

In November, 2004, San José voters approved a ten-year Library Parcel Tax to contribute directly to the Library's budget. The revenue provides funding to acquire new books, magazines, computers, and other materials; to improve educational programs and other services for children, adults, and seniors; and to repair and upgrade libraries. Prior to this, the City Council approved a resolution declaring the Council's intent to maintain the current City funding levels for the Library Department in the event that the Library Parcel Tax was enacted. This was done to assure voters that parcel tax revenues would not simply replace budgeted general funds, but, rather, that these special dedicated funds would augment general funding sources of the city, allowing for stability and potential growth in Library sources and services.

On June 3, 2014 San José voters approved a 25-year extension of the Library Parcel Tax which was set to expire June 2015. This ballot measure passed with 81 percent of all voters casting "yes" votes.

By approving the continuation of the Library Parcel Tax, voters helped:

- preserve 22 percent, or over \$8 million in library funding
- prevent libraries from closing
- save 53 librarian and support staff jobs
- fund books, media, computers and technology
- preserve library services and safe places for kids to stay after school

The results demonstrated how the Capital of Silicon Valley loves its library system, and wants to maintain the current level of library services available to San José residents, schoolchildren and businesses. Without the win, this funding, representing nearly a quarter of the Library's overall budget, would have resulted in scaling back of materials, programs and services. Now, with ballot measures success, the Library has a steady funding source over more than the next two decades and allows the City to consider restoring past library budget cuts and improve library hours.

Library Parcel Tax Uses

More than 244,000 children, students and adults attended library workshops, reading and cultural programs, and skills training sessions. On top of this, 102,000 children, parents and adult learners participated in library literacy programs. Twenty-three percent (\$8.7M) of the funds for the Library's services and operations came from the Library Parcel Tax with the remaining 77 percent (\$29.7M) supplied by the General Fund and Construction and Conveyance Fund.

Between July 2013 and June 2014, more than 231,000 new books, eResources, audiobooks, DVD's, CD's and other media items were added to the library's public collection. The Construction & Conveyance Tax paid for 57 percent (\$3M)—while voter-approved Library Parcel Tax funded 43 percent (\$2.3M)—of these materials.

Last year, 10.5M books, DVDs, CDs and audiobooks were borrowed by library customers and 400,000 eBooks were downloaded. Seventy-two percent (\$1.4M) of the allocated funds for automation came from the Library Parcel Tax which maintains the handling equipment and computer infrastructure to ensure speedy access to the collection.

Customers of all ages made 6.4M visits to San José public libraries, and posed 548,000 questions and requests for information. Library staff provided customer-focused services to each of these inquiries.

To ensure service for this level of usage, the San José Public Library employs 317 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. The General Fund and the Construction & Conveyance Tax contribute to 264 FTE. The Library Parcel Tax ensures staff retention and supports 53 full-time equivalent staff.

Library usage continues to rise as San José's population makes steady gains and grows beyond one million. Thus, healthy Library funding is crucial to meet growing community needs. It also helps preserve access to this essential community resource for residents, job seekers, entrepreneurs, teachers and students of all ages.

QUICK LINKS

- [Classic Catalog \(https://catalog.sjlibrary.org/search\)](https://catalog.sjlibrary.org/search)
- [Become a Member \(/membership\)](/membership)
- [Locations & Hours \(/locations\)](/locations)
- [Education & Digital Literacy \(/education\)](/education)
- [San José Public Library Foundation \(https://www.sjplf.org/\)](https://www.sjplf.org/)
- [Contact Us \(/contact\)](/contact)
- [Chat with a Librarian \(/chat\)](/chat)
- [Site Map \(/site-map\)](/site-map)

ABOUT SJPL

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