



Budget Issues Looming for Library

By Charles Wohlforth, board member

Since the tough fight to protect the library's budget in the fall of 2009, the Anchorage Library Foundation has been preparing for another round before the Anchorage Assembly and Mayor Sullivan. Library supporters will be called upon to speak up before budget decisions are made in the coming months.

Last year the Mayor proposed cuts to staff, hours and materials that would have brought the Anchorage Public Library \$1.2 million below the previous year's funding, a decline of 13%. After a strong turn-out from library supporters, the Assembly restored funding for branch hours. Mayor Sullivan vetoed some of the restored funding, but the Assembly overrode his veto.

How do we stack up?	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010
Municipality Budget ¹	\$207,296,420	\$188,992,140	\$217,640,580	\$256,001,380	\$329,807,480	\$421,425,248
Library Budget ²	\$8,331,580	\$5,210,970	\$6,837,460	\$7,258,220	\$6,782,130	\$7,605,225
Library % of MOA Budget	4.02%	2.76%	3.14%	2.84%	2.06%	1.80%
Materials Budget ¹	\$1,047,650	\$711,400	\$869,330	\$1,088,500	\$953,220	\$780,000
Library Staff, Full Time	131	93	96	93	67	69
Library Staff, Part Time	19	15	40	36	32	28
Library Staff, Total	150	108	136	129	99	97
Population of Anchorage		226,338		260,283		286,174 ³
APL Cardholders	80,002					172,608

¹ All budget figures obtained from Approved Municipal Operating Budgets. 1985-2000 budgets found in library archives. 2005-2010 budgets found at: www.muni.org/Departments/budget/operatingBudget/Pages/default.aspx. ² Library budget figures are direct costs only and do not include Intergovernmental Charges. ³ 2010 census numbers not available at time of publication, used 2009 estimates from U.S. Census Department.

From the Library Advocacy Committee, Library Budget Fact Sheet.

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Anchorage Library Renewal Initiative Phase One Complete

Congratulations on your new library! The new Mountain View Branch opened in September and it would not have happened without you. The Mountain View Library has had amazing community support—from individuals and local families like you, to businesses small and large, foundations, and governments. Thank you so much.

For generations, communities have invested in public libraries because public libraries are enablers of the great American dream! A public library is a safe place where each and every one of us can go to learn, to work, to meet others, to experience something new, to

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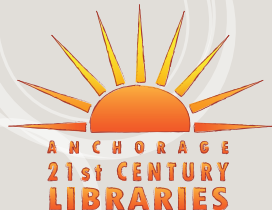
Community Plan Progress Report

The Anchorage Public Library Community Plan challenged our community to imagine a world-class 21st century public library for Anchorage, and over 6,000 people helped shape a vision for the future of our Library.

Despite budgetary woes that have put the Anchorage Public Library (APL) into survival mode, the Library has begun implementing many of the recommendations of the plan to improve services and respond to community feedback.

Since the release of the plan in January, the library has doubled community outreach via social media, launched an information campaign, established new partnerships and leveraged these relationships to expand programming.

To learn more about the progress of the community plan, go to: www.AnchorageLibraryFoundation.org



Library Renewal Initiative — phase one complete

plan for tomorrow, or simply to be inspired—all free of charge, without being judged, and with a friendly librarian to help us in our endeavors. A public library is an open door to our world and all of its marvels, mysteries, and opportunities.

But a free public library is not a given. If neglected, or taken for granted, it will deteriorate. It takes community members like you and me to invest in our library and to educate our leaders to insure that they do the same.

Your support of the Anchorage Library Foundation has had a tremendous positive impact on our library and community. Thanks to you, the Municipality recently completed the first phase of the Anchorage Library Renewal Initiative, raising over \$14 million in private, local, state, and federal funds to build or renovate four branch libraries and to create a roadmap for the future with the Library Community Plan.

But we are not done! A year from now, we will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Z. J. Loussac Library and simultaneously launch the second phase of the Renewal Initiative—a campaign for Loussac and the future.

Over the next year your Anchorage Library Foundation will work with the Municipality (1) to identify what must be done to and for Loussac to allow it to fulfill its mission over the next 10 to 25 years and (2) to seek increased support for this renewal effort and mission from the State of Alaska and the people of Anchorage, and from local businesses, foundations, and you.

As this effort comes together, we will keep you informed, so stayed tuned for future updates.



The new Mountain View Branch Library opened September 7th (top). Sisters check out the latest books at Mountain View (middle). The Children's Learning Center was made possible by a donation from the Gottstein Family and features bright colors and many languages (bottom).

Become a *Library Insider*

Be the first to learn about exciting upcoming library events and workshops! You can become a *Library Insider* by joining one or more of the APL news feeds:

Monthly Anchorage Public Library e-newsletter calendar:

www.muni.org/enewsletters/pages/signup.aspx

Follow the Library on Facebook: www.facebook.com/anchoragepubliclibrary

and on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/AnchLibrary>

Don't forget to keep up with the latest news from the Library Foundation at www.AnchorageLibraryFoundation.org. You can learn about upcoming events, check the progress of library construction projects and make online donations.

To receive Foundation email alerts, send an email to: subscribe@AnchorageLibraryFoundation.org



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This year Mayor Sullivan has announced the need for additional severe cuts to the Municipal budget. Much of the shortfall comes about because the Mayor's previous budget lowered the tax cap.

The Foundation's board has worked all year with the other library support organizations to prepare for the coming debate. Building on the successful Library Community Plan, completed in January, the board convened an Advocacy Committee to strategize on how to defend the budget.

The support organizations met with consultants who helped chart an advocacy plan. Over the summer, the committee invited Assembly members to the libraries to learn about their value. Information sheets about the system's needs and funding shortfalls are available on the Foundation website: www.AnchorageLibraryFoundation.org

As the 2011 budget develops, the signs suggest we will be in a defensive position once again, despite the library's history of underfunding and need for a budget increase. After the previous rounds of cutting, any further reductions will cause the loss of services at the library, such as closure of branches.

The Library did get a boost in the Mayor's recent public process to gather citizen opinions about the budget. More than 60 percent supported increased taxes to prevent further cuts to services. Many advocated to spare smaller departments like the Library.

Keep in touch with the Foundation by checking the website or signing up for email updates. Everyone who cares about the library will be needed in the coming budget fight.

Editor's note: on October 1, Mayor Sullivan proposed a 2011 budget that would close the Samson-Diamond Branch. Check www.AnchorageLibraryFoundation.org for updates.

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Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name to use in recognition materials: _____

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The Anchorage Public Library has *transformed* my life!

“I love using the Samson-Dimond branch! I reserve the books I am looking for online and then wait for the confirmation that they are in. I can go and collect my books, check myself out and be on my way with just what I need. As a UAA student, this is so handy. I also love that I can get books from the UAA library placed on reserve to pick up at Dimond. It saves me so much time!”

—JM Lacher, Samson-Dimond patron, June 19, 2010



“I would like to tell you about my favorite library, which is the Muldoon branch. I enjoy being able to enter the library quickly and find the DVD or book I am looking for without having to look in various places. This branch may be small, but they also do an excellent job of getting my hold orders ready for me to pick up. I truly do appreciate the Muldoon Library and feel that I am lucky to have such a nice place to go.”

—Kara Edwards, Muldoon patron, July 14, 2010

How has the library transformed *your* life?

Send your story to info@AnchorageLibraryFoundation.org