



Testimony

of

Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH

Commissioner

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

before the

**New York City Council Committee on Health
Jointly with the Committee on Finance and the
Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism,
Substance Abuse & Disability Services**

on the

FY 2019 Executive Budget

May 18, 2018

**City Hall – Council Chambers
New York City**

Good morning Chairpersons Dromm, Ayala and Levine, and members of the committees. I am Dr. Mary Bassett, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. I am joined today by First Deputy Commissioner Dr. Oxiris Barbot and Sandy Rozza, Deputy Commissioner for Finance. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on our Executive Budget for fiscal year 2019.

The Department has once again had a tremendously productive year defending the health of New Yorkers. We have been busy implementing the comprehensive package of tobacco bills signed into law last summer, expanding our internal racial justice reform efforts, scaling up citywide efforts under ThriveNYC and rolling out elements of the Mayor's Neighborhood Rat Reduction Initiative. We reopened the Chelsea Sexual Health Clinic, worked with our sister agencies to enroll 80,000 New Yorkers in health insurance through GetCoveredNYC and engaged New Yorkers through the "Help Me Quit" app, which is designed to help people quit smoking. The Department launched "Living Sure," the City's campaign to promote pre-exposure prophylaxis – or PrEP – to women, and recently announced that New York City's air is the cleanest it has been since monitoring began in 2008.

And earlier this month, New York City reinforced its status as one of the most progressive cities in the country with Mayor de Blasio's support for a one-year research pilot for Overdose Prevention Centers, or OPCs. The pilot would open Centers in up to four existing syringe exchange programs that can operate an OPC without City funding. We are pleased with the leadership of the Mayor and this Council in supporting this demonstrated lifesaving overdose prevention method. We are standing on the right side of history with this decision. If the requirements to proceed with OPCs are met, and we take action here in New York, others across the country will follow. We look forward to further discussions with our sister agencies, elected officials and community members about this critical program in the coming months.

We are able to do all of this and more thanks to continued support from the Administration and Council. We are grateful to the Mayor for the addition of over \$11 million a year in the Executive Budget. With this funding, we will continue to tackle the City's opioid crisis. Since the launch of HealingNYC, the Department has distributed over 70,000 naloxone kits – contributing to the City's goal to distribute 100,000 kits, engaged providers and pharmacists and have implemented innovative care linkage approaches. We have conducted public media campaigns, naloxone trainings and targeted neighborhood-based education efforts to ensure that New Yorkers are aware of this epidemic and that this is an all-hands-on-deck effort.

We are proud of the great progress made under HealingNYC, but we recognize the need for additional services for those most at risk for overdose. This new funding will allow us to expand our Relay program, from 10 to 15 hospitals. This program utilizes Peer Wellness

Advocates in hospital emergency departments for counseling and linkage to care after a nonfatal overdose. We will also establish an End Overdose Training Institute to serve as a technical assistance center to help increase overdose prevention capacity and naloxone distribution. And we will implement a new naloxone leave-behind program with the FDNY so first responders can leave naloxone kits with people at risk of future overdose. Additionally, we are expanding the capacity of our HEAT and Co-Response units in order to provide behavioral health expertise for individuals with a mental health or substance misuse crisis. These newly funded efforts will enable the City to provide proactive, health-oriented interventions to people who need them most.

Turning to other budget updates, while we were pleased that proposed cuts at both the state and federal levels were not included in final spending legislation, we are concerned that the consistent attacks on public health funding will lead to future reductions that will force the Department to reduce vital services. We were relieved to see that the state budget cut to tuberculosis prevention and control funding was rejected in the final budget, as were proposed reductions to other critical public health services, such as School Based Health Centers and Poison Control Centers. At the federal level, we were cautiously happy to see that the Omnibus spending bill passed by Congress did not include the severe cuts to the Department of Health and Human Services proposed in the President's Budget. Perhaps this is an indication that Congress recognizes that public health is a bipartisan, critical area of work. And although we were spared significant budget cuts, our programs are otherwise jeopardized by federal policy shifts outside of the budget process that are not based on science, including those that would allow LGBTQ discrimination in health care settings, endorse abstinence-only sexual health education and threaten the status of immigrants. It remains clear that the Trump Administration does not share the values of our City's Administration nor its legislators, and we will continue to fight back against proposals that would widen disparities and put New Yorkers at risk.

I hope you never tire of hearing me say that we are fiercely committed to health equity, and that we are deploying the most evidence-based, skill-driven and expert-led strategies to do so. We have made progress in the past year, but racial disparities in life expectancy, disease burden and infant and maternal mortalities remain. This is unfair, unjust and preventable, and addressing these inequities must remain a top priority throughout all of our work; our staff is taking this challenge head-on.

I want to thank the Mayor for the resources dedicated to the Department in the Executive Plan. And thank you to the Speaker, Chairs Levine, Ayala, and Dromm, and the members of the committees for your partnership and shared commitment to protecting and promoting the health of all New Yorkers. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, I will gladly take questions.

NYC Cultural Affairs

New York City Council

Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations

Fiscal Year 2019 Executive Budget Oversight Hearing

Friday, May 18, 2018 – Council Chambers, City Hall

Testimony Presented by New York City Department of Cultural Affairs
Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl

Good afternoon, Chair Van Bramer and members of the committee. I am Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl, here today to testify in regards to the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2019 executive budget proposal for the Department of Cultural Affairs. I am joined by a number of my staff from the agency.

I'll begin with a look at the numbers. DCLA's total FY19 executive budget is \$145.3M. By comparison, at this point last year our FY18 executive budget was \$143.1M. The FY19 executive budget includes:

- \$28.5M for the Cultural Development Fund
- \$108.3M for the Cultural Institutions Group
- \$1.25M energy support for groups on City property
- \$6.1M for agency operations
- \$1M for Capacity Building and other agency programs

As always, these figures do not include Council initiatives that are typically added at adoption.

I'm happy to report that we have baselined the \$1.25M in energy support for cultural groups on DCLA property. This group consists of 10 diverse organizations around the city, from BRIC and Weeksville in Brooklyn to Pregones Theatre in the Bronx. We first provided this funding on a one-time basis in FY17 and again in FY18. This baselined funding will provide a source of stable support for these groups that serve as community anchors for their respective neighborhoods. If you've ever been to a Celebrate Brooklyn concert or seen a performance at Harlem Stage, you can appreciate the vitality and vibrancy of this particular group of organizations.

DCLA's four-year capital budget, which I testified on at the preliminary budget hearing in March, is unaffected by the executive budget. It allocates \$933.84M to projects for 250 cultural groups citywide. This investment continues to provide extraordinary cultural facilities accessible to all New Yorkers. Just yesterday, I joined National Museum of the American Indian director Kevin Grover just a few blocks south of here to cut the ribbon on the new imagiNATIONS Activity Center. With funding from the Mayor, City Council, and Manhattan Borough President, the multimillion-dollar upgrade transformed office space into modernized education and exhibition spaces that engage young visitors in learning Native innovations from throughout history. And next month, we'll help cut the ribbon on the much-anticipated Ocean Wonders: Sharks! exhibit at the New York

Aquarium in Coney Island. This project represents a major City investment, marking a milestone in the institution's recovery from Hurricane Sandy.

As of the executive budget, DCLA's FY18 Modified Budget is now \$186.5M. This remains the largest allocation in agency history, and the largest public source of cultural funding anywhere in the U.S. outside of the federal government. We're proud to work alongside City Council to make these historic investments. The roadmap provided by the CreateNYC cultural plan has made this an extraordinary year of progress and new beginnings in the cultural community.

One big theme that ran through our hundreds of meeting and tens of thousands of interactions with the public throughout the CreateNYC engagement process was a strong desire for more integration of cultural activity across City government. People saw opportunities for the arts to enrich a wide spectrum of public services. They also identified a range of new and existing services that could help artists and the wider cultural community to stay and thrive in New York City.

It is important to understand that culture has long been integral to programs across City agencies. With full support from the Mayor and City Hall, art and culture are valued across a wide range of portfolios that may not typically be linked to the arts. This not only brings the remarkable value of culture into City services, but directs hundreds of millions of dollars to artists and cultural workers. Even in agencies with long histories of supporting the arts, we've seen a major boost in support under this Administration and City Council. For instance, the Department of Education alone invested more than \$400M in arts education last fiscal year, an all-time high thanks to the Mayor and City Council's \$23M increase in arts education funding. DOE employed 2,770 full-time art teachers last year, 377 more in the 2013-2014 school year – a remarkable fact that marks a major investment in the future of this city. Some of the other ways that City agencies beyond DCLA are working to support art and culture include:

- Just this month, First Lady Chirlane McCray and the Department of Correction announced a pilot program designed to allow mothers currently incarcerated at Rikers Island to visit and participate in activities with their children at the Children's Museum of Manhattan. By providing incarcerated parents and their children opportunities to engage in a creative, supportive context, they can reconnect simply as parent and child – instead of "incarcerated parent" and child. In this way, the power of culture reduces some of the most oppressive burdens of incarceration.
- Last month, the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment announced the **Women's Fund**, a \$5 million grant program to support film and theater projects by, for, or about women. This is a major investment in expanding the voices that are heard in our creative community. It's also just one of a range of programs that MOME has launched to lift up creators from diverse backgrounds, and we're proud to work alongside them in these efforts.
- The City's first-ever **Office of Nightlife** was created, thanks to the leadership of Council, especially Council Member Espinal. In March, Mayor de Blasio appointed Ariel Palitz as its first executive director. Members of the City's DIY community were among the most vocal and passionate advocates

throughout the cultural plan process. We were thrilled to see one of Ariel's first public engagements at Secret Project Robot in Bushwick, where she heard firsthand the range of issues putting pressure on our vibrant and diverse DIY spaces. We look forward to working with this new office to continue the dialogue around supporting a safe, vibrant nightlife.

- Alongside NYCEDC and the Mayor's Office, DCLA continues to build on the Mayor's commitment to expand the supply of **affordable artist workspace**. With a \$30M capital commitment to the Affordable Real Estate for Artists initiative (AREA), we're dedicated to keeping artists here in New York. So much of our creative energy comes from being a city where art isn't just displayed and sold, but actually made. We also want to make sure that the arts remain deeply connected to and rooted in the communities where they're made. Tens of thousands of square feet of projects are in the works, including The Peninsula in the Bronx and ArtBuilt Brooklyn at the Brooklyn Army Terminal. We plan to announce additional projects in the coming months.
- Another inter-agency cultural partnership is not new – but continues to reach new heights in its 40th year. The one and only **Materials for the Arts**, based in Chair Van Bramer's district in Long Island City, Queens, is a collaboration between DCLA, the Department of Education, and Department of Sanitation. We like to say MFTA was green when green was still just a color, diverting millions of pounds of waste from the landfill each year. This year, it will provide materials valued at over \$9 million to thousands of cultural nonprofits, public schools, and City programs, entirely free of charge. To put that in perspective, that's roughly the amount of funding that the city of Philadelphia will provide for culture. Next week, leaders from London's culture, government, and sanitation sectors are visiting for three days to learn more about MFTA, with an eye toward setting up their own version. We're proud that this remarkable organization started and continues to thrive right here in New York.

In my March testimony on the preliminary FY19 budget, I provided more in depth updates about the Mayor's Grant for Cultural Impact and Public Artists in Residence programs. These are just a few of the ways that DCLA is working with fellow agencies to build programming around the power of culture to address some of our most intractable issues.

Now, for a few updates in our efforts to promote a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive cultural sector since the March budget hearing:

- We announced the **CreateNYC Leadership Accelerator** in March to help mid-level cultural workers grow into leadership roles. The demographic survey of DCLA grantees we released in 2016 showed that there is far less diversity at the top of the org chart for many cultural groups. This data highlights barriers within the sector that prevent advancement for underrepresented groups. The Leadership Accelerator program participants will examine systemic issues that prevent more diverse leadership. 25 individuals will take part in this pilot starting at the end of this month, and we hope to expand it in future cycles.
- We announced another exciting outgrowth of the cultural plan on May 7. The **CreateNYC Disability Forward Fund** will offer a total of \$350,000 for programs

that deepen engagement in the arts for people with disabilities as artists, cultural workers, and audiences. Promoting greater access and inclusion in the arts for people with disabilities is one of the cornerstones of CreateNYC. Through this new fund, we want to expand existing programs and invest in new efforts, from workforce training, to disability arts programs. We're eager to see how our cultural constituents respond to this call to action. Applications are due June 1, so please spread the word among your constituents. Additional information is available at nyc.gov/culture.

- On May 4, the latest group of **CUNY Cultural Corps** students celebrated their graduation at Lehman College in the Bronx. Supported with DCLA and Rockefeller Foundation funding, these extraordinary students – more than 120 of them - had paid internships with 62 partner organizations. To date, over 230 students have completed the CUNY Cultural Corps program. About 20% of participants have received job offers from their host sites and many have gone on to explore careers or areas of study in arts and culture. The Cultural Corps has brought hundreds of students into the cultural community who might not have otherwise considered the arts as a career path. Meanwhile, cultural organizations have been thrilled with the smart, skilled students they've had the opportunity to work with through the program. This is laying a solid foundation of professional and personal relationships on which these students can build their careers.
- Unemployment is a systemic issue for New Yorkers with disabilities. The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) estimates that 77% of New Yorkers with disabilities are unemployed. DCLA's definition of workforce diversity includes disability, so this is an issue we're committed to making progress on. In March, we **collaborated with MOPD to offer a workshop** on the subject for our Cultural Institutions Group members. Representatives from 26 organizations met at Carnegie Hall to hear from cultural workers with disabilities, gain insight on best practices for engaging with the disability community, and learn about MOPD's NYC: AT WORK employment initiative. We hope to host similar workshops in the future for our Cultural Development Fund grantees.
- The requirement for **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) plans from the members of the Cultural Institutions Group** was announced by the Mayor when we released CreateNYC. As you know, the CIG consists of a wide range of organizations, from large museums to community-based performing art centers, to zoos and gardens. Their DEI plans will have to reflect these disparate sizes, disciplines, and audiences. But across the board, the groups see this as an opportunity to dive into critical issues that will shape the future of the sector. As our population grows more diverse, our cultural institutions will have to keep pace to continue programming that makes them vital, relevant institutions.

I thank the Council for its ongoing commitment to supporting arts and culture in NYC. Happy to answer any questions you have at this time.



NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND
INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS**

FISCAL YEAR 2019 EXECUTIVE BUDGET AND AGENCY OVERSIGHT HEARING

May 18, 2018

INTRODUCTION

Good morning. My name is Tony Marx and I am the President of The New York Public Library (NYPL). I would like to thank Speaker Corey Johnson, Committee Chair Jimmy Van Bramer, and the entire Finance Committee and City Council for hosting me today. I appreciate the opportunity to testify on the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2019 Executive Budget and want to thank you for your continued leadership in support of New York City's 217 public libraries. Our ability to serve millions of New Yorkers from all walks of life with essential services and programs is dependent on your help in the Fiscal Year 2019 budget.

LIBRARIES ARE FOR EVERYONE

The New York Public Library is proud to partner with the City to provide indispensable services for all ages from all walks of life in every neighborhood throughout the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island at our 88 branches and four research libraries. There were more than 17 million

visits last year and we welcomed everyone: We provided critical early literacy programs to families in nearly every branch, offered MyLibraryNYC curriculum packets and fine-free borrowing for thousands of teachers and students, taught more ESOL classes than ever before to the increasing numbers of immigrants coming from all over the world, and created another new library space for our incarcerated patrons, to name just a few successes. The depth and breadth of what we offer has only continued to expand. As the needs of our patrons have shifted and the digital divide spanned wider, we have been there every step of the way. Our TechConnect programming ensures New Yorkers are equipped to apply to jobs in a market that has left behind paper applications or finish their GED. To prepare the next generation of digital citizens, innovators, and information seekers, all of our librarians are now being trained in a newly developed Youth Tech Portal to help our children and teens succeed.

We are continuously humbled by how thankful our patrons are to receive these essential services. For example, after circulation tripled following the 2016 opening of the library space at the Rose M. Singer facility at Rikers Island, we started conversations with the Department of Corrections about the Manhattan Detention Complex (MDC). At the opening of the MDC library space earlier this month, the incarcerated patrons shared with us that this new resource was a portal to the outside world and that the mural they painted there gave them purpose and a voice.

This experience, and countless other patron stories like this, makes up our more than a century of services to New York City. Throughout, the Library has continued to give and provide more because libraries are for everyone. When funding is cut for services such as summer programming for youth, schools are receiving unequal funding, and the private sector races to roll back net neutrality, there is no doubt that libraries are more important than ever. We pride

ourselves on being there for our patrons, but to continue to meet the needs of our users, something has to give—and we need your help and leadership. We always seek to find creative solutions to ensure impact on patron service is minimal, but without your support and leadership, we will be faced with more difficult decisions—reductions of hours, branch closures during the summer months, or fewer materials and programs. With this in mind, the three library systems are asking for \$16 million in expense funds and \$60 million in capital for Fiscal Year 2019.

EXPENSE NEEDS

NYPL was grateful to receive an expense increase in Fiscal Year 2016. With this investment, we were able to increase hours and hire new staff members, including more than 60 much-needed children's and young adult librarians. These staff members have already made a huge difference, as we testified to in March. In Fiscal Year 2017, early literacy program attendance increased 105% across the system. That translates to more New York City kids being better prepared for school, college, and careers. Additionally, an increase in outreach helped contribute to a 5% increase in circulation system-wide. This accomplishment is especially notable as it runs against national trends.

This is wonderful news, but this progress will be difficult to sustain. In the three years since the City allocated additional expense funds to libraries, the state is leading the nation with progressive strides in several areas, including paid family leave, an increased minimum wage, more healthcare options, and employer-taxed transit benefits. The Library fully supports and aligns with these values and is pleased to see these improvements for New Yorkers and their families. Nevertheless, these increased costs have significantly stretched our budget, requiring

an additional investment to continue our current levels of service. Of the \$16 million expense ask from the three library systems, \$7 million would be allocated to NYPL, and a portion of that would be used to sustain our existing wages and benefits for our tireless librarians and staff across the system. These staff members are the backbone of NYPL, and our success is dependent on them.

The second portion of NYPL's ask is for collections. While staff outreach has certainly contributed to our increased circulation, so has our dedication to our collections. Each year, the Library carefully and strategically purchases over one million new books to ensure our shelves are full of the materials that New Yorkers need and deserve. With demand increasing for these materials, and costs continuing to rise, it is increasingly hard to keep books on our shelves. For example, early reader picture books that help prepare young children for school are in near-constant circulation. Test prep books are another example: These vital books are expensive, must be replaced each year to ensure relevance, and yet continue to fly off our shelves. In 2017, the top checkout in the Bronx was a prep book for a high school equivalency test. Other test prep books help with job certification tests, the SATs, and specialized high school entrance exams. At Bronx Library Center—a branch where 66% of people in the surrounding community have an education level of high school or lower—test prep books are by far the most requested item. Indeed, the branch cannot seem to order enough books to satisfy the ever-growing demand. This issue will only get more prominent as the cost of books continues to rise, so it is crucial that funding for collections also increases. With increased funding for collections, NYPL could purchase more of the materials that New Yorkers so desperately need: books focusing on test prep, early literacy, e-books, world languages, and other key areas.

The final portion of our expense ask would go towards capially ineligible projects. Our buildings serve as a safe and welcoming environment in every neighborhood, but these high-usage public spaces are, on average, 60 years old. In Manhattan, the average age rises to 84 years old. While we are thankful to the Council for much-needed critical maintenance funding and our inclusion in the City's 10-Year Plan, not all of our projects are capially eligible, which forces us to use expense funding for these types of issues.

For example, the floors at our 115th Street–Harry Belafonte branch are in desperate need of refinishing. Without intervention, the flooring will soon reach a state beyond repair, though we all know that replacement is far costlier. On its own, this project is not eligible for capital funding and will cost the Library \$20,000 in expense funding, money we will need to redirect from programming and collections. Another example is Hamilton Fish Library on the Lower East Side. There, an HVAC replacement project has been so delayed by the Department of Design and Construction that we had to spend \$20,000 of expense funding on temporary coolers for the branch—money we would have otherwise spent on programs. Yet, even with this expense, the coolers are insufficient to to adequately cool the sizable branch during the heat of the summer. Therefore, while we await a more permanent solution, our Facilities staff must work to construct a small room with temporary walls inside the branch to ensure at least a portion of the location is adequately cooled. Without this makeshift solution, we would be forced to close the branch during the summer. The examples continue—at Soundview Library in the Bronx, a key element of the HVAC system failed and we were forced to spend \$28,000 to keep the branch operational for our patrons. Across our system, much-needed paint, carpeting, and other basic needs would quickly revitalize our branches, but none are capially eligible—and all take away funds from

other essential programs and services for our users.

CRITICAL MAINTENANCE NEEDS

In addition to our \$16 million expense ask, the three library systems request \$60 million for critical maintenance and physical infrastructure, or \$20 million per system. While our overall need exceeds \$1 billion in capital improvements, we have made the decision to focus on the most pressing needs. At NYPL, a \$20 million increase would be used for mechanical system and energy conservation upgrades, facade preservation work, ADA compliance, and a technology infrastructure refresh, including Wi-Fi, computers, phones, and network upgrades to better protect patron privacy and security. As we highlighted in March, branches such as St. George Library Center on Staten Island, Tremont Library in the Bronx, and Columbus Library in Manhattan face particularly pressing needs, such as chronic leaks or inaccessible entrances, which are impacting our ability to serve.

CONCLUSION

At The New York Public Library, we seek to enrich the lives of all New Yorkers and to provide our communities with the information and opportunities they seek. Libraries are for everyone and we are dedicated to serving as a reliable partner to the City by providing programs and services for those who need them most. The level and ability at which we continue to serve our patrons is dependent on your leadership. We know you understand how important libraries are and we are incredibly grateful for your support. Today, as we face rising costs across so many areas, we need further support to avoid service disruptions—reductions of hours, branch closures during construction projects, or fewer materials and programs. By working together

over the last few years we have been able to significantly enhance library service to New Yorkers. Now we must work together to sustain it.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and for your steadfast support of libraries. We remain available to answer any questions you may have.

**Brooklyn Public Library testimony to the
Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup
Relations, jointly with the Committee on Finance
Executive Budget Hearing**

May 18, 2018, 12:00 PM

Thank you Chair Van Bramer and Chair Dromm. We are grateful to you and your committees, to Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Cumbo, our Brooklyn delegation, and the entire City Council, for supporting New York City's libraries.

We are proud of the advances set in motion three years ago, when you made it possible for us to provide universal six-day service. We depend on your dedication to our libraries, among the city's most democratic institutions, so we can help the over 37 million visitors we see each year.

To continue to serve the public at the level they have come to expect and deserve, we need the city's increased support. Unfortunately, the executive budget did not include an increase for libraries. The FY2019 Tri-Library budget request is modest yet urgent; we are seeking an additional \$16 million in operating funds to be split among the three library systems, paired with an increase of \$60 million in capital. Without additional expense funds this year, we will face tough choices ahead.

For Brooklyn Public Library, the \$4.5 million in operating funds we are requesting will allow us to continue providing 6-day a week service, maintain our physical spaces and expand our collections. The cost of library services over the past three years has increased but our operating budget has not.

People rely heavily on their local libraries and nowhere is that more evident than our program attendance. Last fiscal year, Brooklyn Public Library held over 63,000 program sessions across all age groups, with nearly a million attendees. We are the borough's largest provider of free Wi-Fi, hosting 555,000 connections and over 1.3 million computer sessions. It is standing room only for children and their caregivers at our weekly Storytime programs offered in every branch, in multiple languages as often as possible. Our services aim to engage families, job seekers, older adults, veterans, homeless, immigrants, teens, entrepreneurs—truly, everyone is welcome here.

Brooklyn Public Library has encouraged innovation by providing mentorship and resources to library staff with creative new ideas through the *BPL Incubator*. However, staff costs have risen dramatically, and our popular and inventive programming could be at stake if another year goes by without additional operating dollars. Just last weekend, Central Library was teeming with excitement for the inaugural runway show of *Bklyn Fashion Academy*, a pilot program of the *BPL Incubator*. The first of its kind, this 12 week fashion and business series was spearheaded by our Business and Career Center. Fourteen aspiring designers ages 20 to 70 showed their lines, on the runway at Central Library.

At BPL, the size of our collection is also well below what it should be for a system serving over 2.6 million people. In years where we faced budget cuts, we chose to keep our staff in place at the expense of the collection budget. However, holding the collection budget constant for this long has taken a toll. Our branches need additional materials—with an emphasis on world languages—and our e-book circulation is soaring, up 19% over this time last year. The increase we are seeking in expense dollars would allow us to purchase an additional 1,200 new books per branch that our patrons need and deserve.

Additionally, our ability to serve the public is compromised by our aging buildings, most of which are plagued by maintenance issues and equipment failures. We spend approximately one million precious operating dollars every year maintaining old boilers, replacing dilapidated furniture, and funding temporary heating and cooling fixes as we wait for capital projects to replace broken systems. We are funding urgent projects that are either not capitolly eligible or are impractical, costly and time consuming to address through the city's design and construction process.

In order to avoid another summer of closing branches to the public, branches which are relied upon as cooling centers, we spent valuable operating funds to maintain library service. For example, Flatbush Library is set to reopen on May 30 after a 1 month closure to retrofit the HVAC, and Spring Creek Library will close on May 25 and reopen a month later. In both branches, staff and patrons have suffered through heat and reduced hours over the last few summers as failed HVAC systems wait for a full replacement. The HVAC units at Bedford, Brownsville and Pacific Libraries are too old to fix, instead staff and patrons must shout over the noisy portable chillers we have installed, until capital projects to replace those systems are underway.

Just as we are faced with multiple emergency cooling issues every summer, we expect to spend significant expense dollars this coming winter to maintain or replace old boilers throughout our system. Mapleton and Borough Park Libraries both have boilers that are beyond their useful life and we anticipate they may fail this coming winter. In order to keep our libraries open, these fixes will compete for our treasured expense dollars, and ultimately take funds away from other worthy library operations.

New code requirements are also adding cost to our operating budget. New York City elevator regulations have been updated and now require door lock monitoring systems, a control that will prevent an elevator cab from moving if the door is open. Accordingly, every one of our 35 branch elevators will be upgraded in the coming year and will cost several hundred thousand expense dollars.

Brooklyn Public Library has 1.1 million square feet of physical space to maintain. At our current level of capital funding, it is impossible for us to address any but the most urgent problems. We spend much of our time and resources responding to emergencies, which can exhaust an entire year's capital allocation, rather than holistically approaching building renovations.

As I stated at the outset, the three library systems are requesting a total of \$60 million in capital funding this year, \$20 million for each system. In Brooklyn, innovative library construction projects in Sunset Park, Greenpoint, Brower Park, and Brooklyn Heights have eliminated millions in unfunded capital needs. Revenue from the redevelopment of Brooklyn Heights Library is allowing us to improve several branches that are badly in need of repair. We are beginning to make progress by reducing Brooklyn Public Library's unfunded needs from \$300 million to approximately \$240 million.

But there is a limit to what we can do on our own. Chronic underfunding makes it impossible for us to manage capital plans efficiently. Urgent projects are often delayed over every change in scope. Because libraries do not have recurring discretionary funding in the ten-year plan, we cannot draw from future fiscal years to cover current year shortfalls, leading to delays and further cost escalations.

While each library system needs \$20 million *this budget year* to fix failing infrastructure, backfill shortfalls and replace equipment, it is equally important for libraries to be included in *next year's* ten-year capital plan. Without a reliable, recurring source of funding, we are not able to perform necessary preventative maintenance, we cannot ensure projects that encounter a shortfall will continue to move forward, and we cannot manage our physical plant—city owned buildings—in the most comprehensive and efficient way possible.

As you have already proven, libraries are an excellent investment. Our doors are open wide to everyone, and our branches provide resources that support personal advancement and strengthen the fabric of our communities. As you consider requests from many worthy organizations and agencies, remember the millions of New Yorkers who visit our branches each year. People who: deserve programs that lift them up and collections that inspire; spaces that are welcoming and buildings that are safe. New Yorkers deserve to love their libraries. Thank you.



Statement by Dennis M. Walcott, President and CEO, Queens Library

New York City Council Joint Committees on Finance and Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations

Fiscal Year 2019 Executive Budget Hearing

May 18, 2018

Good afternoon. I am Dennis Walcott, President and CEO of Queens Library. It is a pleasure to be here. Thank you, Chairs Dromm and Van Bramer, Speaker Johnson and the members of this distinguished Joint Committee for the opportunity to testify today.

The Queens Public Library system consists of 65 locations across the borough, including a stand-alone teen center in Far Rockaway, a Universal Pre-K program at the Ravenswood public housing complex, and a technology center at Queensbridge Houses. Our libraries have never been more important to our borough and our City than they are today.

Public libraries play a critical role in a free democratic society, providing opportunities for growth and empowerment to all at no cost. The public depends on us for programs, services and access to reliable and unfiltered information that improve the quality of their daily lives. It would be impossible for us to meet their needs without your steadfast support and leadership. Therefore, it is with deep gratitude that I thank you on behalf of every person who works at and is served by Queens Library.

Fiscal Year 2017 was another extremely busy and productive year for us as one of the largest public library systems in the nation. We welcomed 11.2 million customers and saw substantial increases in visitors at several of our locations. For example, the Court Square community library had a 17% increase in visitors, the Lefrak and Bellerose community libraries each had a 14% increase and the Peninsula community library had a 13% increase.

More than 1.4 million customers participated in a Queens Library program during Fiscal Year 2017. This number represents an all-time high for our system, surpassing last year's record high by 27%.

The Library circulated more than 12.7 million books, DVDs, magazines and other materials, and three million people used our computers to access the internet. Queens Library maintains a collection that consists of print and digital materials in 223 languages, and our total circulation of materials in languages other than English last year was 1.3 million. While our numbers are impressive, they are vulnerable to stagnation or decline unless we keep pace with the ever-changing learning needs of the most heterogeneous place in the world.

For example, in a recent survey of Queens Library customers as part of the process for developing our strategic plan, we heard repeated calls for additional investment in the number and variety of print and electronic books, job skills and training programs for immigrants and resources to provide meaningful learning experiences for teens.

Queens Library provides classes, workshops and services in the languages spoken by the borough's immigrant communities, which assist new immigrants in adapting to life in America, and offers programs that celebrate the cultures of the diverse ethnic groups in Queens.

Last year we offered 126 English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes at 36 sites across our system to nearly 4,000 individuals, with 7,100 sessions. We presented citizenship classes, citizenship application assistance and confidential financial counseling to 2,000 people.

Queens Library has long been a primary destination for immigrant New Yorkers. With the establishment of the New Americans Program in 1977, we became the first public library in the nation to provide comprehensive programs and services to newcomers. The goal was to help them adjust to their new home and keep them connected to what they left behind by building a multilingual collection and creating relevant programming, such as coping skills workshops, native-language coding classes, and cultural events.

To keep pace with the ever-changing communities of Queens, members of our staff scan federal and local demographic data to pinpoint where the borough's newcomers live and where they are from. This information is enhanced by what our community librarians see on the ground. They reach out to their communities to understand who is living in the diverse neighborhoods of Queens and look out for telling details, like new restaurants and newspapers in languages other than English on the newsstands.

Through the New Americans Program, we presented coping skills workshops to more than 4,000 people in Spanish, Mandarin, Bengali, Korean and Russian, the five most spoken languages in Queens aside from English. Professionals, including lawyers, social workers, doctors, and business experts, guide them through immigration law, citizenship, housing, worker's rights, starting a business, finding a job, parenting and health.

The program works in close partnership with organizations such as United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Queens Borough President's Immigration Task Force, Women for Afghan Women, the New York Tibetan Services Center and many others.

It helps people and gets real results for them. People like Robert Melbourne, a recent immigrant from Jamaica. Seeking to improve his reading skills, last July Robert enrolled in literacy classes and went from a second grade reading level to a fifth grade reading level with less than 20 weeks of instruction. He also sought employment opportunities. The Library helped him create a resume and referred him to another of our signature initiatives: The Job & Business Academy (JBA). Through its services, Robert received security guard training and certification, recently obtained his Employment Authorization and a NYS driver's license and was hired by a major shipping company.

The Job & Business Academy provides specialized training and learning opportunities, with an emphasis on technology training, to job seekers, aspiring entrepreneurs, and business owners. In FY 2017, JBA staff served 25,422 customers with 41,366 hours of training and individual assistance. In total, JBA offered nearly 700 technology training classes, 700 job search workshops, 175 entrepreneurship and small business workshops and 84 job skills training workshops.

JBA prepares Queens residents to thrive in the modern workforce. Individuals seeking to access JBA services get started by using Job Map, an innovative online job skills assessment tool developed by Queens Library. Based on assessments and one-on-one interviews with JBA staff, customers are enrolled in structured job search classes, workshops and technology training classes.

JBA also runs a free incubator for aspiring food entrepreneurs in conjunction with the New York City Economic Development Corporation called, "Jamaica FEASTS" (Food Entrepreneurship and Services Training Space). The program was created to provide resources to those who are looking to start and run their own food business in Queens. Those who participate in this program learn the fundamentals of getting a start in food business with hands-on workshops, access to a commercial kitchen, and a one-on-one session with an industry expert.

The program is the only one of its kind in Queens. Workshops cover a range of topics, including financial planning, marketing, and food industry best practices. It is ideal for neighborhood cooks seeking to expand their experience, new Americans looking to start a business and recent culinary school graduates who want to learn the business side of the food world.

The program has achieved some amazing outcomes for its participants, like a woman named Tress Walker, founder of “Mum’s Kitchen” in Jamaica, which sells West Indian cuisine and baked goods. Her vision was to create a space where “mums” like her from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds could cook together and sell their goods. Through the program, she gained all of the legal, financial and logistical knowledge needed to build her business. “Mum’s” debuted in April 2018 at the night market in Flushing Meadows Park.

Our Adult Learner Program (ALP) provides services, resources, and lifelong learning opportunities to the changing communities of Queens. We operate seven Adult Learning Centers with full-time professional staff and volunteers who tutor literacy groups and facilitate ESOL conversation groups. Centers also offer Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes, video groups, writing groups, technology-assisted instruction, and ongoing tutor training provided by professional staff. In Fiscal Year 2017, we administered over 200 ABE classes serving nearly 1,300 students. For our Pre-High School Equivalency courses, we administered 168 classes serving nearly 500 students.

For our older adults, Queens Library offers a wealth of free programs and resources that include:

- Book-discussion groups
- Intergenerational Creative Arts programs
- Live performances and readings
- Talks and panel discussions
- Film screenings
- Drama clubs, chess clubs and arts and crafts workshops
- Our Stay Well Exercise Program, which introduces adults age 60 and older to special exercises, relaxation techniques and principles of good nutrition
- Computer Training Courses, where we offer a range of classes appropriate for older learners, including beginning classes on using computers, the Internet, email, Microsoft programs, Google, Facebook and other technologies and social media
- Our Mail-A-Book Program, which offers homebound individuals free delivery of library materials right to their door.

Materials include books in large print, audio books, e-books, e-readers, movies and games. Mail-A-Book also offers lectures, classes, book discussions, music and theater, debates and chats by teleconference, video and live stream. In FY 2017, we delivered over 50,000 items to over 5,500 homebound individuals.

More than 250 families have participated in our Video Visitation program, which allows incarcerated individuals to remain connected to their children and loved ones.

We launched our “Queens Library is for Everyone” campaign last year, making clear that we serve and welcome all no matter their background or circumstances. Through two, 31-hour overnight events – one at our Corona community library in June 2017 and another at the Peninsula community library in August 2017 – we opened our doors to all with educational workshops and programs, a pop-up library on the Rockaway Beach boardwalk, music and film programs after midnight, sunrise yoga, and regular library services around the clock for those who might not otherwise be able to access them. The participation and feedback from the public were tremendous.

The extensive amount of resources Queens Library provides to our customers is crucial and allows individuals to be and achieve their best. When customers enter our doors, they know we are ready and able to help, whether it is through an ESOL class, a Home Health Aide course, a newly published book or the chance to learn how to create an email account. **In order to continue to provide free and high quality materials, programs and services, we are requesting \$4.5 million in additional operational funding in Fiscal Year 2019.** This funding will allow us to: increase our collections and materials; continue to offer expanded programs and services six-days a week; cover rising personnel costs; and address emergency repairs to our libraries.

We had two major re-openings in the past 18 months at the Elmhurst (Dec. 2016) and Kew Gardens Hills (Sept. 2017) community libraries. We are looking forward to breaking ground on the new Far Rockaway community library this year, and to opening the Hunters Point community library in 2019.

We will soon be opening a Central Operations Center in Jamaica, which will consolidate custodial and maintenance staff and supplies. This will free up approximately 10,000 square feet in various community libraries that had been used for such purposes, but will now be used for valuable programs and services for our customers. Additionally, we recently increased our Internet bandwidth by three times to improve the speed of customer-accessed computers in our libraries and Wi-Fi performance for customers' devices.

We are proud of all we have accomplished this year in partnership with each of you, and we are optimistic about the work ahead. We recently completed a comprehensive strategic planning process through which we engaged people across the borough, library and non-library users alike. Informed by thoughtful and impassioned feedback, focus groups, strategy sessions, and an analysis of demographic data and trends, our blueprint for the next five years positions Queens Library to secure the promise of people's lives and strengthen this incredibly diverse borough. I am happy to report that, thanks to each of you, your colleagues in the City Council and Mayor Bill de Blasio, we have significant capital projects planned throughout the borough. Here are several of them:

- We have interior renovation projects planned for our Richmond Hill, Steinway, Bay Terrace and Glendale community libraries.
- We have security system upgrades scheduled for our Broadway, Court Square, Ridgewood, Middle Village, North Hills, and Lefferts community libraries.
- We have an expansion project in progress at the East Elmhurst community library, and expansion and renovation projects planned for our Briarwood, Rosedale, Laurelton, Corona, Douglaston and Jackson Heights community libraries.
- We have roofing, accessibility and critical infrastructure projects set for our Seaside, Broad Channel, South Jamaica, Astoria and Flushing community libraries.
- And, as announced this past summer, a brand new library will be built at Rego Park.

Maintaining our 65 locations and aging infrastructure is a short- and long-term challenge for us. The average community library is 61 years old. More than a third of our buildings are over 50 years old. They are heavily used, and most were not constructed to accommodate the traffic that we experience on a daily basis due to the growth in demand for our services. The Library has identified a capital need of nearly \$173 million over the next 10 years to address critical infrastructure projects and to modernize all of our facilities and bring them into a state of good repair, with a \$41 million need in Fiscal Year 2019.

Queens Library transforms lives by cultivating intellectual and personal growth. As the center of community life, we build strong neighborhoods through the multitude of free services we provide. I am proud to say that Queens Library does an outstanding job in meeting the needs of our diverse constituents. Our accomplishments have been many, but so too are our needs.

When the City awarded the library systems \$43 million to expand to six-day service in Fiscal Year 2016, we made clear that the funding, while significant, would, at \$22 million below our ask, need to be stretched to cover six-day service. Because library operating funds have remained flat for the last two fiscal years while costs and demand have risen, difficult decisions may lie ahead. Without increased funding, the Library may find itself in the unenviable position of having to reduce or eliminate some programs and services or consider reducing operating hours.

This is why our \$16 million collective expense ask is so very important. We recognize there will always be difficult budgetary decisions to make, as there is a finite number of dollars to allocate; however, we are courting an impending crisis. We will continue to operate at maximum efficiency, but the reality is that rising costs and rising demand will eventually push us to the point where hard decisions will have to be made that will noticeably impact our public service.

I sincerely thank all of you for your commitment to New York City's libraries over the last several years. It is our hope that you will continue to invest in and stand with libraries as we provide indispensable programs and services that the people of this great City have come to rely on every day.

Chairs Dromm and Van Bramer, members of the Joint Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

INVEST IN LIBRARIES LIBRARIES ARE FOR EVERYONE

FY19 EXECUTIVE BUDGET HEARING

MAY 18, 2018

LINDA E. JOHNSON, **BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY** | DENNIS M. WALCOTT, **QUEENS LIBRARY** | TONY MARX, **THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Bklyn
Public Library



New York
Public
Library

 Queens Library

#INVESTINLIBRARIES

INVEST IN LIBRARIES

Libraries Are for Everyone

Libraries inspire, create our future authors, and help the community.

-Marya

THE NYPL HAS KEPT MY SONGS OFF THE STREETS AFTER SCHOOL. THERE ARE LITTLE TO NO AFFORDABLE PROGRAMS FOR KIDS WHO PARENTS WORK FULL-TIME. they're safe and homework is done. they read alot. thanks NYPL

-Latiya, West New Brighton Library

Our library is always full of people reading, using the computers, and enjoying the peace and quiet. It's a great neighborhood resource we need. Plus, they gave me an art show of my work! An honor!

-Roxana, Inwood library

The library is a place to connect with my two favorite things: books and people.

-Maja, 425th St. Library

I cannot imagine life without the library-it is a valuable resource for all ages

-louise

There is nothing like a library. And the staff at Grand Central makes me feel so welcome!

-Dede, Grand Central Library

The library can be a refuge in a busy City. We can get out of our apartments and can relax and learn without traveling far from home. In NYC, you need libraries to balance the chaos of city living

-Leslie, Spuyten Duyvil Library

Great daily games, crafts and learning actives for community members of all ages!! Pleasant and attentive staff members who are always ready to assist and even join in the fun!!!

-Monique, Westchester Square Library

I love libraries!

-Vasyl, Seward Park Library

I have always been thankful for this nook in the neighborhood. A sanctuary of knowledge and fun and the greatest escape from the parents! I have some of the fondest childhood memories here...1985!!!

-Monique, Van Cortlandt Library

Reading IS fundamental...and libraries offer so much more. From formative childhood to advanced age (but young at heart), libraries have significance throughout a person's life. xoxoxo

-Ofelia, Yorkville Library

The best place to go for help, quietude and info, is the public library.

-audrey, Battery Park City Library

The Schomburg library the most important place available to me for research to write my dissertation. I'm writing on August Wilson. The staff is ON POINT!!!

-MARGA, Cuyote Cullen Library

My granddaughter learned organized play and socialization with Ms. Amy at the toddler story time program. It prepared her for nursery school. These programs are priceless.

-Marie, Tottenville Library

The NYPL made me a writer which is how I earned my living for 50 years!

-Mary, Yorkville Library

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New York
Public
Library



May 18, 2018 | 2

INVEST IN LIBRARIES

NYC's 3 Library Systems: FY19 Needs

OPERATING

\$16 MILLION IN FY19

- Brooklyn Public Library: \$4.5M
- The New York Public Library: \$7M
- Queens Library: \$4.5M

CAPITAL

\$60 MILLION IN FY19

For Critical Needs

- Brooklyn Public Library: \$20M
- The New York Public Library: \$20M
- Queens Library: \$20M

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY
FY19 Operating Needs

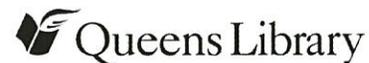


OPERATING
\$4.5 MILLION IN FY19

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Library



BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Rising Demand, Rising Costs

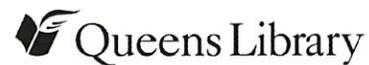


Central Library,
Brooklyn Public Library

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Public
Library



BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Collections



Park Slope Library,
Brooklyn Public Library

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May 18, 2018 | 6

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Non-Eligible Capital Needs

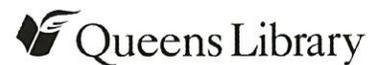


Brooklyn Public Library

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Public
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BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY
FY19 Capital Needs



CAPITAL

\$20 MILLION IN FY19

For Critical Maintenance

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Critical Maintenance



Pacific Library

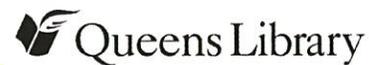


Midwood Library

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LIBRARIES ARE FOR EVERYONE

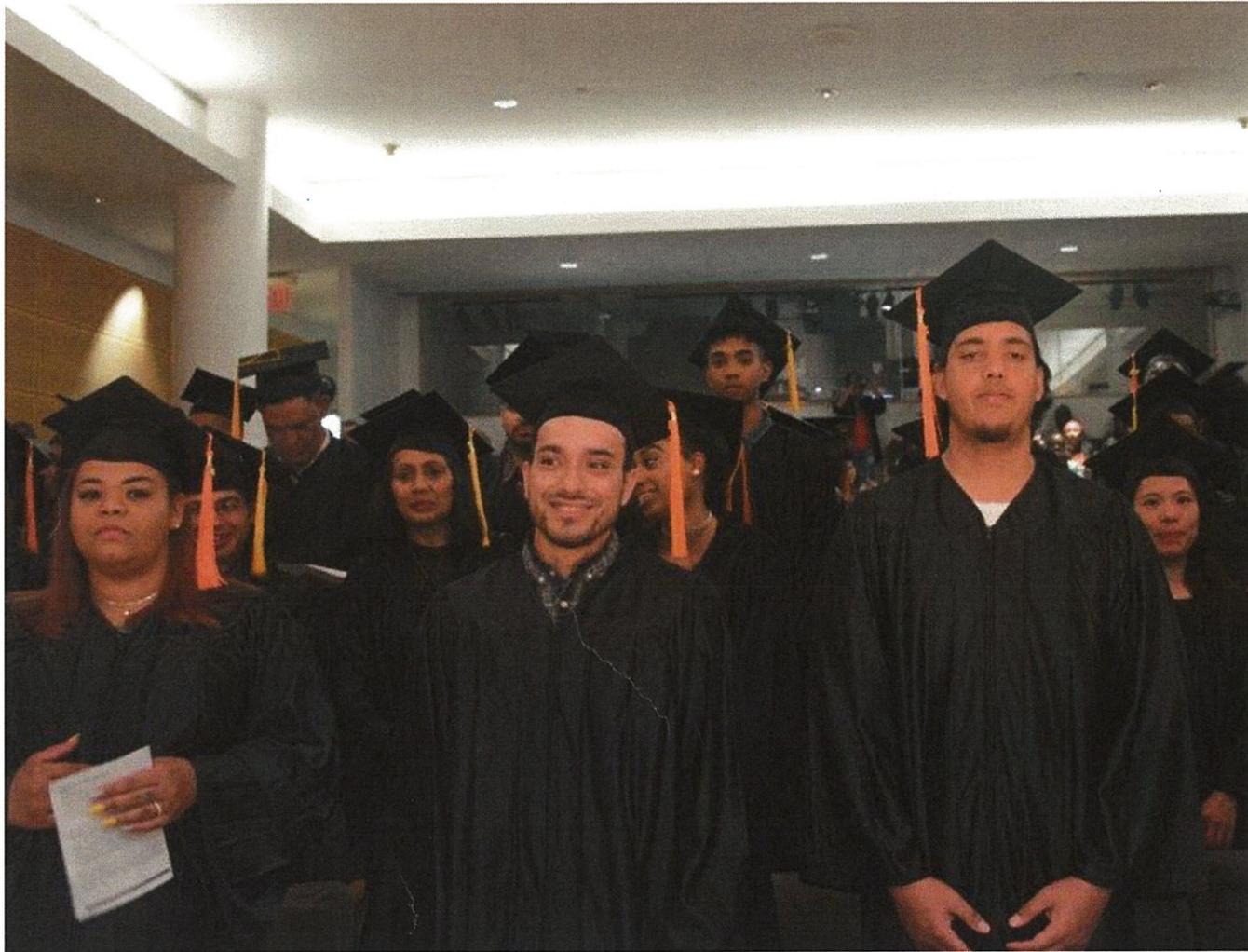


New York
Public
Library



QUEENS LIBRARY

Libraries Are for Everyone

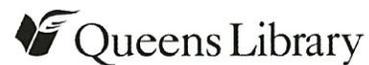


Flushing Community Library,
QueensLibrary

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New York
Public
Library



QUEENS LIBRARY

FY19 Capital Needs



CAPITAL

\$20 MILLION IN FY19

For Critical Infrastructure

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QUEENS LIBRARY

Critical Infrastructure



Baisley Park Community Library

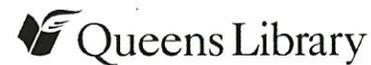


Rosedale Community Library

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Public
Library



FY19 Operating Needs



OPERATING
\$4.5 MILLION IN FY19

QUEENS LIBRARY

Programs & Collections



Corona Community Library,
Queens Library

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New York
Public
Library



QUEENS LIBRARY

Rising Demand, Rising Costs



Peninsula Community Library,
Queens Library

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New York
Public
Library



THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

FY19 Operating Needs



New York
Public
Library

OPERATING

\$7 MILLION IN FY19

- Total Branches: \$5.9M
- Total Research: \$1.1M

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Bklyn
Public Library



New York
Public
Library

 Queens Library

May 18, 2018 | 16

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Rising Demand, Rising Staff Costs

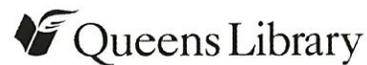


Mosholu Library,
The New York Public Library

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Public
Library



May 18, 2018 | 17

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Materials

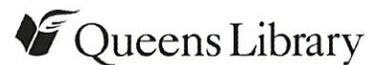


Bronx Library Center
The New York Public Library

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New York
Public
Library



May 18, 2018 | 18

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Non-Eligible Capital Needs



Hamilton Fish Park Library,
The New York Public Library

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New York
Public
Library



May 18, 2018 | 19

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
FY19 Capital Needs



New York
Public
Library

CAPITAL

\$20 MILLION IN FY19

For Critical Maintenance

- Mechanical system & energy conservation upgrades
- Building envelope & facility preservation work
- ADA improvements
- Information technology infrastructure



THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

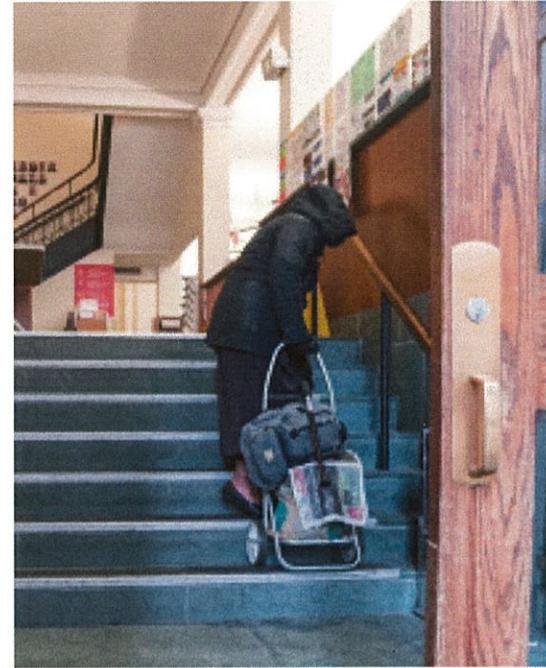
Critical Maintenance



St. George Library Center, Staten Island



Tremont Library, Bronx

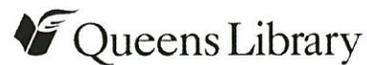


Columbus Library, Manhattan

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New York
Public
Library



INVEST IN LIBRARIES

NYC's 3 Library Systems: FY19 Needs

OPERATING

\$16 MILLION IN FY19

- Brooklyn Public Library: \$4.5M
- The New York Public Library: \$7M
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For Critical Needs

- Brooklyn Public Library: \$20M
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- Queens Library: \$20M

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LIBRARIES**

ARE FOR

EVERYONE

Bklyn
Public Library



New York
Public
Library

 Queens Library

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**New York City Council
Committee on Finance and Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup
Relations,**

T2018-1892 New York City Council FY 2019 Executive Budget Hearings

Public Comments, Libraries

May 24, 2018, Committee Room, City Hall

Testimony by Veronika Conant, M.L.S.

W 54 StNew York, NY 10019 vaconant@yahoo.com

I am Veronika Conant, a retired academic librarian, member of the Committee to Save the New York Public Library, and past President of the West 54 - 55 Street Block Association, active during the disastrous sale of the Donnell Library. I am speaking in my own name.

NYC's public libraries are doing a great deal of good work. I strongly support plans to increase both their operating and capital budgets, and add to the FY 2019 capital funds much needed additional funds for repairs, upgrades and investment in preventive maintenance.

Libraries are more important today than ever before, allowing everyone safe, free use of resources, and helping users find reliable information. I would especially like to stress the importance of knowing how to evaluate information, a special skill of professional librarians.

Using my decades of expertise, I would like to discuss my concerns about and recommendations for NYPL's plans, not discussed at last week's Executive Budget hearings:

1) NYPL's Master Plan for the 42nd Street Research Library, costing \$317 million, w/o including the seven floors of book stacks for which the City owned building was built in 1911 by the City on land owned by the City. According to the original agreement between the NYPL and City, NYPL agreed to function as the free public research library for the City, develop the research collection and provide free access to research materials for all New Yorkers and visitors in exchange for the City to provide and maintain the building. **This arrangement has worked extremely well for over 100 years and made NYPL into an internationally respected research institution. This arrangement is currently threatened.**

NYPL's current construction priorities are very troubling. There is no overall vision, just expensive and mostly low priority plans at great expense. Five years after NYPL emptied the book stacks in secret and carted off-site about three million research materials, and four years after they abandoned the Central Library Plan (CLP), NYPL is now doing a stacks study, still ignoring the needs of researchers who request the return of the research collection from off-site. There is a large off-site storage in **ReCAP (Research Collections and Consortium), in Princeton NJ**, <https://recap.princeton.edu/> about 50 miles away, shared with two private institutions, Princeton and Columbia, with over 5.2 million research items from NYPL's collection.

NYPL wants this shared consortia arrangement to remain permanent. Our public library has essentially outsourced its unique research collection and hundreds of library jobs to Princeton, NJ, another state. We need library jobs in NYC, for New Yorkers.

Access to the off-site collection has been taking too long, is poorly organized and is causing research and researchers severe problems.

ReCAP's online catalog is now available to both Columbia and Princeton but is not yet functional in NYPL's online catalog.

The Committee to Save the NYPL separately submitted an official Response to the Master Plan, please look at that carefully <http://www.savenypl.org>. The cost of \$317 million for internal renovation of the 42nd Street Library is far too high, especially without doing anything in the stacks. **The empty stacks would need only \$46-47 million**

one time expense (cost for about 160,000 sf would be under \$300 per sf) to upgrade their existing HVAC and sprinkler systems and allow return of the three million research materials into a closed, extremely efficient and functional book delivery system for easy access to researchers in the Rose Reading Room, above.

I am very strongly against the Master Plan (Central Library Plan in disguise) and ask you to please practice your oversight powers and do not allow any capital improvements in the building until the HVAC is upgraded in the book stacks and the research collection is returned there. This must be PRIORITY ONE.

Even after the 42nd Street book shelves are again full, construction plans for the rest of the building need careful study of each component. \$317 million for the interior construction is a very steep price, see statement under branch libraries.

I want to clarify that the completion of the second under Bryant Park storage area (brainchild of Vartan Gregorian, (NYPL Pres. 1981 - 1989) is much appreciated but their purpose was to double the local storage capacity, not to replace it. **Only what can not be kept on location belongs off-site.**

The cost of ReCAP for each member is according to their size and frequency of use. **In 2016 NYPL contributed about 38.4% of the cost, the largest.** Princeton only contributes less than one quarter (23.7%), with Columbia in between. NYPL must disclose the annual cost of ReCAP.

Fortunately NYPL is in the middle of a large metropolis. Both NYPL and Columbia are members of **METRO (Metropolitan NY Library Council)**, a 275 member group of local libraries which, through a cooperative agreement, provides access to the collections of all participating libraries either through interlibrary loan of circulating materials with daily deliveries, or by getting a METRO referral card from the originating library for a one-time, on-site use of any of the 275 libraries. This can be repeated as many times as needed. Therefore, instead of losing access to millions of materials from NYPL's collection stored permanently off-site, if the three million items are returned to the 42nd Street book stacks, where they belong, NYPL users can get a METRO card any time and use Columbia, NYU, etc. much better than access to Princeton's collection would allow, also making the collection easily accessible to all New Yorkers.

2) Branch libraries

a) Operating budget

I recommend a careful examination of the operating budget. Too little is spent on growing the collection compared to that spent on fundraising and administration. There are many questions.

b) Capital budget

In comparison to the \$317 million Master Plan for the 42nd Street library, **NYPL's Estimated FY 2017 - 2020 total construction needs for 54 individual NYPL libraries, including the circulating branch libraries and more for system-wide work are almost \$332 million.**

I recommend to study the list at the NYS Library's website

<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/construc/needs.htm#NYPL> and fund the capital needs in those branches before allowing additional funds spent on the 42nd Street Library.

c) Mid-Manhattan Library

I was delighted to hear in 2014 that NYPL decided not to sell the most heavily used circulating branch library in Manhattan, but renovate it. It is good to open up and reconfigure space in a different way. However, I have concerns about the expensive (\$200 million for 100,000-150,000 square feet, means cost of \$1,500-\$2,000 for each square foot) and intrusive plans for the interior renovation of the Mid-Manhattan Library. The architect plans to cut an atrium out of the middle of the Library, losing valuable floor space, and on one side will be a windowless "long room", filled with book stacks, but no seating, and on the other side library users will have seating, computers, etc. The two will be connected by walkways, presenting a problem not only to the elderly, children and the disabled, but also to all those wanting to use the library collection. **Why not have bookshelves all over on each floor, near people and seating?**

Plans are for only 400,000 volume collection while before capacity was 700,000 volumes.

(In 1970, NYPL opened the Mid-Manhattan Library on the top three floors of the old Constable department store (the rest of the building was added in 1982). In 1970 a Wilson Library Journal article states "the building, whose lower floors house a department store, provides three floors (63,000 square feet), seating for 1,033 and a **book stack capacity of 700,000**". By 1982 the collection was over 500,000. After the Donnell closed (2008), its World Languages Collection (about 175,000 volumes) went to Mid-Manhattan. Users know that NYPL removed a substantial part of the circulating collection while expecting it to close, so a 400,000 volume collection is already a low number.)

The collection will also include business resources from SIBL, shrunk to fit the space

Rooftop terrace is a nice luxury, how much does it cost to create?

d) Sale of SIBL is a major mistake - SIBL, the Science Industry and Business Library, a major research library with a small circulating collection, was only completed, fully wired, in 1996, cost \$100 million, 213,000 square feet. Five floors, holding 1.2 -1.6 million research materials sold in 2012 to Church Pension Group for \$60.8 million, and three floors with the library itself sold for \$93.4 million in Dec. 2016 to Vulcan Real Estate for about 100,000 square feet, \$930 per square feet. **The total sale amounted to \$152.2 million, much less than the \$200 million cost of renovation of Mid-Manhattan and also much less than the estimated \$317 million cost of renovation of the 42nd Street Library as estimated in the Master Plan. Why sell such a beautiful, completely ready, award winning library, loved by many, next to the CUNY Graduate Center, at excellent location? Why not continue to collect research materials in science and technology?**

In my opinion these are bad budget decisions, with serious consequences for the entire NYPL system. Far too much funds are allocated to two library buildings out of 92, as described above. Please do not allow this to happen.

e) In addition, there are plans to demolish and replace the popular and much used, single standing **Inwood Library** with a new one as part of a large, new, affordable housing development. The community is still fighting these efforts.

Libraries are precious and must be protected and cherished, not sold at a time when more people than ever are needing and using them. We must not allow the power of real estate developers be greater than the power of knowledge. Transparency, accountability and oversight of the entire NYPL System is much needed. Please do not allow the sale of any public library, including SIBL, a research library.

In summary, the library's essence is not how much space is empty but how large and good a collection it contains, how many people can be seated at tables, ease of access to both seating and the collection, having adequate number of computers, laptops and wiring for technology, as well as adequate and well qualified and compensated staff, and hours open.

DDC. I disagree with the complaints heard last week against DDC (Department of Design and Construction). **The Donnell Library was sold and not replaced by NYPL for EIGHT YEARS. So far the 42nd Street book stacks have been empty for 5 years. The new plans still don't include them. How many more years do we have to wait in our City owned building?**

I believe the public library systems do not want oversight and regulation. It is all the more reason for me to recommend the use of DDC, and not a pass through process which allows less oversight for very expensive plans rather than ensure functional, cost effective ones.

Thank you.
Sincerely,

Veronika Conant M.L.S., retired from Hunter College Libraries
past Pres., West 54 - 55 Street Block Association
Member, Committee to Save the New York Public Library www.savenypl.org
W 54th St, New York, NY 10019
vaconant@yahoo.com

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: ^{Dr.} Mary Bassett (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: Commissioner

I represent: DOHMH

Address: _____

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Date: _____

Name: Sandy Rozza (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: DOHMH

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Name: Dr. Oxiris Barbot (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: DOHMH

I represent: _____

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Date: _____

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Name: Corinneschuff

Address: Deputy Commissioner

I represent: Environmental Health

Address: DOHMH

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Name: Demetre Daskalakis

Address: Deputy Commissioner

I represent: Disease Control

Address: DOHMH

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Name: Hillary Kunin's

Address: Assistant Commissioner

I represent: Div. Mental Hygiene

Address: DOHMH

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 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tom Finkelpearl

Address: 31 Chambers St

I represent: NYC Dept of Cultural Affairs

Address: "

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 in favor in opposition

Date: May 18, 2018

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dennis M. Walcott

Address: 89-11 Merrick Blvd 11432

I represent: Queens Library

Address:

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Name: Tony Marx

Address: NYPL

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Linda Johnson

Address: President & CEO

I represent: Brooklyn Public Library

Address: _____

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