Library Commission updates the Branch Library Improvement Program

On March 1, 2007, the Library Commission considered the overall Branch Library Improvement Program and voted to change the budget, schedule, and scope of several projects. Highlights of their discussion included:

The Program is a Success – Voters overwhelmingly passed a $106 million bond to refurbish and upgrade the city's branch libraries. The first new branch library in 40 years opened in Mission Bay, and two renovated branches in the Excelsior and West Portal have opened. Several branches are under construction and the Sunset, Marina and new Glen Park libraries will open in 2007.

Construction Escalation – The Library has incurred unprecedented construction cost escalation, similar to what other construction projects throughout California and beyond have faced. As a result, the Library needs approximately $40 million to complete the program.

Commitment to Finishing the Entire Program –The Library is committed to completing the program to revitalize our branch system commensurate with the quality that San Franciscans need and expect.

Postponing Projects & Doing Them Right – Five projects will be postponed in order to fund active and upcoming projects. Originally slated for renovations, North Beach and Ortega will get new larger buildings. The revised Bayview project includes buying an adjacent property and renovating and expanding the existing branch. Golden Gate Valley, an historic Carnegie building, was budgeted additional funds to renovate and expand. The Merced branch will be renovated and expanded after the new Ingleside branch is open.

Bond Priorities –The branches most at risk for damage during an earthquake were fully funded (Richmond, Noe Valley and Marina). To finish replacing leased facilities (Glen Park, Ingleside, Portola, Visitacion Valley) with new City-owned buildings, the Visitacion Valley project budget was increased and a new branch will be constructed.

Securing Additional Funds – Several funding options will be explored to complete the program. The City's Capital Planning Committee has recommended that the Library pursue the renewal of the Library Preservation Fund (Proposition E) this November, and include language in the set aside ballot measure giving the Library authority to issue revenue bonds which will generate additional BLIP funds. This proposal as well as other funding options is under consideration.

The Library is looking forward to working with community members to complete our vision of safe, upgraded, 21st Century branch libraries in every neighborhood.

We voted to renovate and build new branch libraries across the city. It's happening!

BRANCH LIBRARY
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

San Francisco Public Library