

## Library Seeks Renewal of Dedicated Property Tax to Fund All Operations for the Next 10 Years

- **Library Millage Election Date = October 11, 2025**
- **Metro Council Approves the Proposition on February 12, 2025**
  - NOT MUCH TIME to derive the cost projections for the next taxing decade!
    - Fiscal Year for 2024 is not yet closed.
    - CIP numbers used in Projections are based on **Facilities Master Plan's preliminary findings**
    - We are still awaiting final results of the Facilities Master Plan to fully understand future CIP costs
    - We are still waiting to learn how the reduction in the Railroad Property Tax will affect us
    - **Based on preliminary findings, 10.5 millage rate works for the Library system through 2035**

### LIBRARY PROPOSAL → RENEW THE 10-YEAR MILLAGE, BUT AT THE LOWER 10.5 MILLAGE RATE

- **THIS IS NOT A NEW TAX**
- We are asking for a LOWER RATE than in the last 30 years
  - *During elections in 1995, 2005, & 2015, the voters awarded 11.1 mills to the Library*
  - *We are able to operate at a lower 10.5 millage rate during the next decade because the largest capital projects have already been completed*
- Detailed Cost Projections include planning for **2 Rollbacks** within the next 10 years (*as we always do*)

### WHAT DOES THE 10.5 MILLS TAX SUPPORT?

- Even at this lower millage rate than in previous decades, services will **NOT** be diminished
- **10.5 mills maintains the same level of programs and services**
- 10.5 mills will generate sufficient funding to **operate** all 15 locations 7 days a week (*88.25% of total millage*)
  - Salaries (47%) and contractual services (24%) comprise 71% of this year's budget, + 13% for books and supplies
- 10.5 mills also funds the implementation of the next phase of the **Facilities Master Plan** (*11.75% of total*)
  - Includes numerous necessary improvements/renovations at all locations to protect the public's investment
  - Constructs the new START Branch in North Baton Rouge, to fill in a major service gap
  - Funds the capital outlay for a future library in the new Juvenile Services Center
  - Also includes planning for the START Branch in South Baton Rouge
  - Accounts for inflation, important since local construction inflation has outpaced other costs (*5% - 29.22%*)
- **Pay-As-You-Go Plan** is maintained (*we've operated on a Pay-As-You-Go basis since 1986*)
- It's ALL or NOTHING... The Library receives NO OTHER FUNDING
- So ... the vote is a simple one, once we get to polls: Shall there be a Library? Yes ... or No ...

### MAJOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS DETAILS FROM THE FACILITIES MASTER PLAN:

- Scotlandville Phase 2 – Renovation/Expansion of existing branch (*NOTE: Bids are due January 16, 2025*)
- Bluebonnet Phase 3 – Renovation of lighting, restrooms, circulation & adult areas, & large meeting rooms
- Baker – Renovation/Expansion of existing branch, adding access from Liberty (*selecting Architect in 2025*)
- Central – Renovation/Expansion of existing branch
- Zachary – Renovation/Expansion of existing branch
- Delmont Gardens – replace branch with new construction at another location, not yet sited
- Delmont Gardens Small Business Incubator / Workforce Development Center – renovate existing building
- Juvenile Services Center library and programming area (we are currently in the Juvenile Detention Center)
- North START Branch – new construction in North Baton Rouge, at old Earl K. Long Hospital site
  - START = Strategically Targeted Access for Resources and Technology
  - Envisioned as an approximately 8,000 sf facility, full service, open daily, conference rooms, but no large meeting room
- Carver – Renovation/Expansion
- Eden Park – Renovation/Expansion
- Pride-Chaneyville – upgrades/anticipated repairs and replacements
- Main Library – upgrades/anticipated repairs and replacements
- Fairwood – upgrades/anticipated repairs and replacements
- Capital outlay to underwrite a Library in the new Juvenile Services Center (we are currently in the JDC)
- South START Branch – new construction in South Baton Rouge area, potentially west of Gardere

## OVERALL:

- **Nationally Ranked Star-rated Library System** (10 Years of Stars) with a proven track record for 85 years
- **14, soon to be 15, conveniently located library locations**; all locations are open 7 days a week
- Active **Outreach** program with 4 bookmobiles serving 100s of preschools and retirement centers, etc.
- **In 2024, the value of items checked out exceeded \$26 million plus over \$18.6 million for ebook downloads.**
- **Great KPIs** and output measures show constant engagement and use by the public; our numbers are UP!

## FISCAL REPUTATION:

- **Pay-As-You-Go** Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)
- Transparency in all operations, with citizen engagement throughout all planning processes
- The Library **SAVES** funds over time for each project; these funds are designated and assigned in Fund Balance
- Library has constructed **15 attractive and well-used libraries** since 1990 with **NO bonds or indebtedness**
- We are the “Dave Ramsey” of government agencies: transparent, fiscally responsible stewards
- Careful savings allowed us to add / accelerate several projects to the CIP list (Zachary, Fairwood, & South)
- With the imminent opening of the South Branch, all promises for last three taxing decades have been kept
- Award-winning new Main Library demonstrates great examples of future library services and features
- **Citizens voted for us to have an 11.1 millage last THREE times – 1995 and 2005 and 2015**
- **The proposed millage rate of 10.5 mills, including Rollbacks, is a REDUCTION from these previous taxes**

## WHO USES THE LIBRARY?

- **With 310,853 active card holders**, almost Everyone!
- Good market penetration, with 69% of the parish having **CURRENT** library cards
- **About 250,000 cardholders have used their cards within the past 12 months to check items out, use PCs, or access the Digital Library**
- This number does NOT include thousands more residents who simply come into the Library to browse collections in-house, receive reference assistance including homework help, career, small business, local history, and genealogy research, use Wi-Fi, attend programs or meetings, or receive Outreach Services

Visitor Count to Main Library and other Library Facilities (up 2.9% over last year)	1,755,234
Circulation of Library Materials (up 2.9% over last year)	2,850,940
Reference Questions	852,525
Public Computer Usage	223,773
Wi-Fi Usage	908,213
Website Views to www.ebrpl.com (we have other access points, too)	1,768,341
Database Usage as of November 2024 (numbers are slow to come in)	34,302,292
Library Programs, In-House / Virtual (not counting the tutoring)	5,118 / 91
Program Attendance to In-House Programs / Virtual	89,961 / 3,315
Library Staff Presentations Outside the Library (Book Talks, Research Talks, Storytimes)	145
Outreach Service Visits to Pre-schools, Schools, Senior Centers, Community Centers	2,381
Meeting Room Use / Attendance by Community Organizations	5,814 / 95,155
Study Room Use by Individuals	57,766

## Branch Locations as Opposed to Council District Boundaries

- Council District boundaries continue to change over time; library facilities are not “assigned” to individual districts
- Library facilities demonstrate service areas that reflect where people GO, not just where they LIVE
- Patrons come from all over the parish and use libraries near where they live, work, or travel, plus online
- We can map out over 100,000 households with at least one library card throughout the parish
- The usage map shows two remaining residential gap areas that will be filled with the START library branches
- **Outreach Services supplements/augments the work of library facilities**, visiting hundreds of pre-schools, day cares, retirement centers, and community centers throughout the parish

**VALUE PROPOSITION: Citizens are receiving a great return on their investment in the Library.**

In 2024, patrons checked out physical items valued at more than \$ 26,000,000.

PLUS patrons downloaded more than 1.3 million ebooks, at an approximate value of an additional \$ 18,600,000.

That constitutes a DIRECT SAVINGS to the people in our community of \$ 44,600,000 during 2024.

This does not begin to count the value of other items including research, information, and training that EBRPL patrons accessed through the Digital Library or in person.

**What households will pay at the rate of 10.5 mills:**

Millage Rate of 10.5	Property Tax @ 10.5 mills	Equivalent To	Or
Home Valued at \$ 100,000	\$ 26.25	50 cents per week	Less than the cost of one hard back book per year
Home Valued at \$ 125,000	\$ 52.50	\$ 1.01 per week	Approximately two hard back books per year
Home Valued at \$ 150,000	\$ 78.75	\$ 1.51 per week	Three books and a couple of cheeseburgers per year
Home Valued at \$ 165,900	\$ 95.45	\$ 1.84 per week	Four bestselling novels per year or one regular cup of coffee per week
Home Valued at \$ 175,000	\$ 105.00	\$ 2.02 per week	Four books and a music CD from the bargain bin per year
Home Valued at \$ 200,000	\$ 131.25	\$ 2.52 per week	Five books and a pizza ... over the entire year or 15 movie tickets per year
Home Valued at \$ 250,000	\$ 183.75	\$ 3.53 per week	Less than 3 Cups of Mocha Frappuccino Venti per month!
Home Valued at \$ 275,000	\$ 210.00	\$ 4.04 per week	A bit more than 3 Cups of Mocha Frappuccino Venti per month!
Home Valued at \$ 300,000	\$ 236.25	\$ 4.54 per week	Less than one cup of great coffee per week!

<b>Fund Balance Snapshot, projected as of December 2024:</b>	<i>2024 Fiscal Year not yet closed</i>	<b>\$ 92,771,880</b>
<b>Next year's entire Anticipated Operating Budget</b>		<b>\$ 65,121,260</b>
<b>Operating Cash for 2025</b>	<b>\$ 55,608,360</b>	
<b>Capital Transfers Out for Current Projects</b> for South, Baker, Scotlandville Phase 2, Outreach Services, Central, Delmont Gardens, Zachary, and Bluebonnet Branches	<b>\$ 9,512,900</b>	
<b>Dedicated Reserves:</b> Contingency Reserve, Casualty Loss, and Emergency Storm Reserve		<b>\$ 2,000,000</b>
<b>Remainder left to assign for the Library's Pay-As-You-Go Projects in Fund Balance</b> →		<b>\$ 25,650,620</b>
<b>Committed Renovation/Expansion Projects, not fully appropriated</b> for Central, Delmont Gardens Replacement, Delmont Gardens Small Business Incubator, Zachary Branch Expansions/Renovations, and Juvenile Services Center Library		<b>\$ 26,841,427</b>
<b>FUND BALANCE is SHORT this amount, considering the above committed projects</b> → <i>This could be offset in the future with unspent Dedicated Reserves</i>		<b>-\$ 1,190,807</b>
<b>OTHER FUTURE PROJECTS FOR WHICH WE MUST SAVE:</b>		
New North START Branch at the old EKL site		<b>\$ 4,076,700</b>
Carver, Pride-Chaneyville, Eden Park Branch Expansions/Renovations		<b>\$ 19,551,929</b>
New South START Branch located west of Gardere		<b>\$ 4,076,700</b>
Fairwood Branch and Main Library at Goodwood: Repairs/Upgrades		<b>\$ 22,054,795</b>