



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Long Beach City Audit Reveals Library Service Improvements Will Help Meet Diverse Community Needs *Library Needs to Use Current Resources to Implement Recommendations to Better Serve the Community*

Long Beach, CA – Long Beach City Auditor Laura Doud today released a [Performance Audit of Long Beach Public Library \(Library\)](#). Please note: this audit was conducted in 2019, however the timing was impacted due to the City's COVID-19 response. The City offers Library services across nine districts at 11 neighborhood branch locations and the Main library. The audit's objective was to assess the equity and effectiveness of Library services compared to the population served, industry standards and best practices. The audit found the Library can improve by developing a better understanding of the needs of the diverse community it serves and use that understanding to define the Library's strategic goals and services. In addition, the Library can expand its reach through greater partnerships and better promotion of all it has to offer.

"We are so fortunate to have libraries throughout Long Beach and the valuable support they offer our communities," commented Long Beach City Auditor Laura Doud. "Libraries provide resources of hope and are some of the City's greatest assets. They play a critical role in promoting literacy development, educational activities, digital skills, health promotion and many other learning opportunities."

Findings from the audit include:

- open hours do not align with most community members' needs or preferences;
- limited Library programs and materials offered in different languages as most programs (97%) and materials (95%) were offered in English while Long Beach is linguistically diverse;
- an overdue fine structure disproportionately impacts low-income community members from accessing materials when they cannot pay their fines and then subsequently have accounts suspended; and
- limited adaptive technology is offered at only two locations for people with disabilities.

Additionally, the audit found the Library can improve by:

- using data, such as community demographics or material use, for their programming;
- aligning services with strategic goals so programs including those in languages other than English, those for teens and adults, and job assistance services are offered consistently;
- maximizing partnerships to help fill gaps in service areas including technology, economic inclusion and youth and adult education programs;
- maximizing promotion of Library services with tailored outreach activities; and
- maximizing resources including structured staff roles and responsibilities and a centralized volunteer program to assist with Library services.

"I am pleased that management has agreed with all 29 detailed audit recommendations," stated Long Beach City Auditor Laura Doud. "I commend the Library for starting to implement our recommendations and quickly adjusting to meet the needs of the community during these challenging times through their contactless pick up services, online programming, and partnerships. For example, the Library recently partnered with the Technology and Innovation Department to offer community members critical technology resources to increase digital inclusion."

Though the Library agreed with all the recommendations, the Department expressed that they wanted additional funds to implement them. In her rebuttal to Library's response, Long Beach City Auditor Laura Doud explained that there are steps the Library can take now to implement most of the audit recommendations with their existing resources. With the budget constraints facing the City, she encourages management to be proactive and innovative in seeking non-traditional solutions to these ongoing challenges and take steps toward implementation of the recommendations.

The complete Library Services Performance Audit can be viewed [here](#) and the Report Summary Sheet can be viewed [here](#).

About the Long Beach City Auditor's Office

The Long Beach City Auditor's Office's mission is to make Long Beach better through independent audits and fraud investigations. The Office works to provide assurance City funds are spent as intended, promote transparency and accountability of City operations, and prevent fraud, waste and abuse of City resources. For more information visit CityAuditorLauraDoud.com and connect with the Office @LBCityAuditor on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#). Sign up to receive email [updates](#) and download the MyAuditor App at the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#).

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