

Oakland Library Commission Informal Mentoring Plan*

September 2024

The purpose of the Informal Mentoring Plan (IMP) is to help bring new Commissioners up to speed on the activities of the Library Commission (LC). The IMP will help new Commissioners to quickly gain answers to their questions, to understand, to contribute and to join LC committees. This will also help new Commissioners in their advocacy for specific library branches and meeting with City elected officials.

New Commissioners receive a basic orientation from the Library Director before attending their first LC meeting. This orientation ensures that the Commissioners receive an overview of the LC and their obligations as Commissioners before resuming work on the Commission. What is not available in this orientation--a deeper understanding of the City Budget process, Library Measures, the various offerings of the OPL system, and possible sources of support in carrying out our obligations as Commissioners--is what we hope to impart with the IMP

Mentors and Mentees

The program is entirely voluntary. Any new Commissioner can request a Mentor upon joining the Commission. Currently seated Commissioners with at least one year of experience are encouraged--but not required--to provide Mentorship.

Commissioners who express interest in becoming a Mentor or a Mentee will ideally be matched based on shared Council District of residence, provided that such a pairing can be made. Otherwise, Mentors and Mentees will be paired based on availability and shared interest and/or branch/Councilmember assignments.

Mentors and Mentees can be paired at Library Commission Meetings. From that point forward, it is up to the Mentor and Mentee to decide if, when, and how often to meet outside of LC meetings. Mentors should be prepared to commit to six months of mentorship, but the informal relationship can last as long as the Mentor and the Mentee find it mutually agreeable.

Some examples of how Mentors can help new Commissioners include:

- Introducing new commissioners to the Councilmembers and Branch Managers they will be working with
- Answering questions that come up for the Mentee in the course of their new LC duties
- Proactively sharing information that may be of use to the new Commissioner

