

Oakland Library Commission 2026 Talking Points

Objective: Align on a clear, concise message for all Commissioners to share with our elected officials. The goal is to communicate the benefits OPL brings to our community, highlighting the areas where support is needed, and deepening our relationships and rapport. These points are intended to serve as the foundation for your conversations.

"Warm Up" Talking Points (Context)

- Libraries are essential for a vibrant and healthy community. They support education, public safety, resilience, and economic development. They provide that last community gathering place that is free and open to all. **Provide examples from your local branches! Literacy programs, bike fix, youth programs, senior programs, etc.**
- All of these amazing benefits are currently at risk. The city is out of compliance with Parcel Tax Measures C and D, which requires a \$14.5 million General Fund Appropriation. Without this funding the city cannot continue collecting the parcel taxes that make up the bulk of library funding.
- After more than ten years of grassroots advocacy (culminating most recently in City Council's approval to purchase the empty Community Foods property), a library branch may finally be coming back to the Hoover-Foster/Hoover-Durant neighborhood. This community was redlined and its library branch taken away in 1936. Restoring a branch to this neighborhood is an opportunity to address this prior injustice.
- We need the City to see this project through by ensuring that this project is funded.
- In addition, OPL Branches are in dire need of electrical and energy upgrades to support heating and cooling as well as existing and planned programming. For example, a Bike Fix program for youth is currently blocked at the MLK, Jr. Branch because the building cannot safely provide electricity for this program.
- **Please add in your own personalized talking points based on the needs of your branches and concerns of your Councilmember and their district.**

The Ask:

- 1) Restore the **\$14.5 million General Fund appropriation** to OPL's budget for FY26-27 as soon as possible.
- 2) Include **capital appropriations for the Hoover Durant library** in the next bond sale to ensure this branch is built
- 3) Also include **capital appropriations for electrical and energy upgrades** at OPL branches in the next bond sale.
- 4) **Amplify and support OPL in your own work** - Share library updates and programming in your district newsletters, help the LC recruit commissioners from your districts, collaborate across districts to ensure the future of our Libraries for generations to come.

Timeline:

It is urgent to restore the MOE, and also to secure funding for Hoover Durant and electrical upgrades at branches like MLK. There is an opportunity to start restoring the MOE beginning June 2026 during midcycle budget review. **Please reach out to your assigned elected officials ASAP** to schedule an appointment.