

Council Meeting of
November 18, 2008

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

SUBJECT: Community Services-Library Division – Accept and appropriate a grant from the California State Library

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Community Services Director that City Council accept and appropriate a grant from the California State Library in the amount of \$14,800 to implement the Torrance Public Library *LINK* project – Lifelong Information, Networks and Knowledge.

Funding

Funding is from a Library Services and Technology Act Grant from California State Library.

BACKGROUND

In 2007, the Torrance Public Library was invited to participate in “Transforming Life After 50,” a California State Library initiative to prepare public libraries and institutions to serve the Baby Boomer generation. Staff attended a three-day institute on the subject, and completed an extensive community analysis including demographic data-gathering, surveys, focus groups, and attendance at several events.

The community analysis determined that Torrance’s Baby Boomers are highly educated and intensely busy, deeply engaged in their community, and many plan on staying in the city after retirement. They currently socialize through church/synagogue attendance and at their workplace, as well as through sports and fitness activities or the activities of their children. They stressed convenience and flexibility as prime decision factors in how and where they spend their time, both currently and after retirement. Respondents to surveys were interested in, and found value in, current library and community services, but limited technology and barriers such as scattered community information or fees hindered them from taking full advantage of what is available. When asked what they needed to fulfill their goals, many mentioned services that the Library or other City Departments already provide, but Torrance’s Boomers were unaware of. The full assessment was submitted to the California State Library.

Upon successfully completing the community analysis, the Library was invited to apply for a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant to design services and programs to meet the needs found in the community assessment. The Community Services Department formed a team comprised of Library, Recreation, and Cultural Services division staff and designed the Torrance Public Library *LINK* (Lifelong Information Networks and Knowledge) project.

ANALYSIS

The Torrance Public Library *LINK* project meets the need expressed in the community analysis through three components: The first objective is marketing, and will include the creation of a new Web presence for the Library with links to outside agencies, community groups, and resources designed to suit the expressed interests and needs of the Baby Boomer generation. This component will also include professional design of flyers and a logo, and utilization of a professional photographer to capture images for use in marketing campaigns. The Library will launch two new Web ventures – a blog and podcasts – to inform local Boomers of events and activities of interest and provide information in a flexible and interactive format.

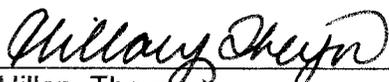
The second component is to create targeted programming, offering two community resource fairs focusing on travel and health and fitness (the most popular subjects enumerated by respondents to the community analysis survey). These events will bring community groups, public and private agencies, and single providers together in a format where members of the Boomer generation can examine a wide variety of resources available in their local area.

The third objective is volunteerism, and will include professional training in examining current volunteer practices, as well as successful recruitment and retention for this generation in order to provide opportunities for civic engagement and an opportunity to “give back” to the Torrance community.

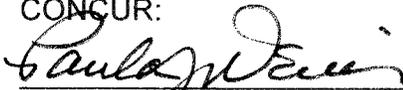
A grant team composed of staff from the Community Services Department and partner agencies will be working on implementing the Torrance Public Library *LINK* project in the coming months, and staff looks forward to providing new and expanded services for Torrance Baby Boomers.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN JONES
COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

By 
Hillary Theyer
Principal Librarian, Public Services

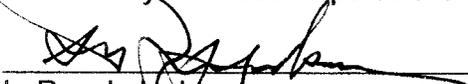
CONCUR:



Paula J. Weiner
City Librarian



John Jones, Director
Community Services Department



LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

Attachment: Award letter from the California State Library dated September 2, 2008



CALIFORNIA
STATE LIBRARY
FOUNDED 1850

September 2, 2008

Paula J. Weiner, City Librarian
Torrance Public Library
3301 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90503-5014

Dear Ms. Weiner:

I am pleased to approve the grant application for the Torrance Public Library LINK - Lifelong Information Networks and Knowledge for a total of \$14,800 in federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds.

Your proposal is to be commended for encompassing many of the strategies deemed critical to successfully meeting the needs and engaging the interests of baby boomers, such as including boomers in your planning and implementation process, creating physical and/or virtual spaces and outreach approaches that specifically appeal to this age demographic, offering new programs that support the specific knowledge, skills and interests of boomers, and forming partnerships that expand your library's capacity to reach this significant population group. The potential of your project to transform library practice and more effectively serve and engage boomers in your community is most promising. I look forward to following your progress as you identify lessons learned, promising practices and new solutions.

The Library Development Services Staff is ready to assist you in making your project a success. Please understand that no grant payments can be processed until the governor signs the State budget. State processing of grant payments can require 6-8 weeks before you receive your check.

Best wishes for a successful project year.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Hildreth".

Susan Hildreth
State Librarian of California

Enclosures

cc: Colette Moody
Suzanne Flint
Hilary Theyer