

From: Patrick Stewart, CEO, Library Foundation SD  
To: San Diego City Council Offices  
Subject: FY27 Budget Priorities – Ensuring 7-Day Service at All 37 San Diego Public Libraries

Dear Councilmembers,

As you prepare your FY27 budget priority memos, I urge you to affirm that all 37 San Diego Public Library branches should be open seven days a week. In a time when divisions in our society are growing, libraries remain one of the few spaces that unite us across neighborhoods, cultures, and generations. In 2024, the Library offered **10,000+ free programs** serving **hundreds of thousands of participants**—but when branches are closed two days a week, those opportunities are lost to the people who need them most. Full access ensures that libraries continue to be ladders of opportunity, closing gaps in education, digital equity, and workforce readiness.

Our Libraries are more than a City service; they are a cornerstone of civic life—they are places where every San Diego resident, regardless of income, age, or background, can find belonging, resources, and opportunity. Each year, nearly **7 million visits** are made to San Diego Public Libraries, making them **one of the most widely used services** in the city. Equity demands that every community have reliable, seven-day access to its branch. A family in Logan Heights deserves the same access as one in La Jolla; a senior in Rancho Bernardo deserves the same welcoming space as a student in City Heights.

Libraries also embody our civic pride as a city that values connection and resilience. They are safe havens in emergencies, trusted anchors in neighborhoods, and gathering places where San Diegans can learn from one another. With **over \$50 million in deferred maintenance** and long-standing underfunding, we have asked our system to do more with less for too long. The annual cost of restoring 7-day service across all branches is **less than one-half of one percent of the City's General Fund**—a modest investment that benefits **half of all San Diego households**, strengthens our civic fabric, and delivers extraordinary returns in education, workforce readiness, and public safety.

On behalf of Library Foundation SD and the communities we serve, I thank you for your leadership and commitment to San Diego's future. By prioritizing 7-day service for all 37 branches in FY27, you will affirm that San Diego is a city that believes in equity, celebrates its civic pride, and invests in the resilience of its people.

Sincerely,  
Patrick E. Stewart  
CEO, Library Foundation SD