September 22, 2026

TO: Nicole Crosby, Candidate for City of San Diego Council District 2

FROM: Patrick Stewart, CEO, Library Foundation SD

CC: Pat Wilson, President, Friends of the San Diego Public Library
Sarah Moga-Alemany, Board of Library Commissioners

RE: Library Foundation SD (LFSD) Council Candidate Questions Request

Library Foundation SD congratulates you on your successful primary race and wishes you the best in the remaining days of your campaign. While the Library Foundation is not endorsing candidates for the 2026 City Council elections, we want you to have the opportunity to share your views with Library donors, advocates, and patrons.

This letter is an invitation to share your answers to a few questions about the role of public libraries in general, the San Diego Public Library specifically, and the issues affecting Library communities throughout the City of San Diego. We are extending this invitation to all City Council candidates.

For 25 years, Library Foundation SD (formerly known as the San Diego Public Library Foundation) has supported the San Diego Public Library through ***philanthropy***, ***advocacy,*** and ***outreach***. The Foundation has secured more than $175 million for capital projects, Library programs, and resources. Our political and public policy support for the Library ensures local, regional, state, and national stakeholders recognize the impact and core value of the San Diego Public Library. Overall, Library Foundation SD is recognized nationally as a leader in support of libraries and the communities they serve.

1. Thinking back to your youth or college years, ***can you share some of your memories of how libraries played a role in your education, learning, research, and/or personal enjoyment?***
   Most notably it was a place of quiet refuge from the chaos of everyday life and school in my teen and college years. I grew up in a neighborhood when gang violence was pervasive in the streets. The library was a place of personal peace where I could learn, explore and dream with seemingly endless resources.

2. As communities continue to evolve, public libraries are expanding far beyond their

traditional role. From digital access and workforce development to literacy and community engagement, libraries help meet a wide range of local needs: centers for learning, technology access, civic engagement, community connection, and support workforce development, youth and adult literacy, digital literacy, and many other community needs. ***What role do you believe the San Diego Public Library should play in the future, and what priorities would guide your vision for the library system?***
Modern development and space utilization seems to be moving towards density without enough open or community usable space. Libraries of the future should be designed or re-designed/enhanced to accommodate community meetings, small group studies or events, and structured non-traditional learning opportunities.

3. In 2023, the City Council unanimously approved and adopted the new, comprehensive Library Master Plan https://www.sandiego.gov/public-library/about-the-library/library-master-plan. Considering population growth, development and density plans, evolving community needs, and the input of over 11,000 San Diegans, the plan moves the Library 30 years into the future. ***What would you do to ensure the plan meets its goals and recommendations, and remains tied to current and future City development concepts?***
It requires direct interaction with the community, library staff and council members. As your Council Member it's important to not lose focus on what libraries bring to the community we serve and represent. Our library spaces must include broader community meeting locations, housing above, and parking - review each district, including my own, to determine which libraries are most in need. Clairemont, in District 2, doesn't have a communal space in any of its libraries. They are also all in locations that can be redeveloped to include and co-locate enhanced spaces, parking, and housing.

4. Compared to like-sized, large urban library systems, the San Diego Public Library ranks among the lowest in public funding. Its per-capita spending on basic books, materials, and resources are 1/7th that of the County of San Diego, for example. At approximately $75M annual budget, this represents roughly half of the Seattle Public Library's budget serving a city population half the size of San Diego. ***How would you address this historic, year-over-year divestment in what San Diegans repeatedly recognize as an important, core City service?***
Again, as your Council Member I will remain focused on the needs of the district and core services, and projects that enhance our community must be preserved. I will commit to ensuring the Libraries are not a budget afterthought or rainy day fund to raid.

5. The Library Ordinance, passed by the City Council in November, 2000, requires that the Library budget be set at no less than 6% of the General Fund. This Ordinance has

never been met, and in fact, the average Library budget has, and remains, approximately 3%. ***How would you address conversations designed to slowly, over time, ensure that the Library Ordinance is achieved?***
It is a core service in my community and I will ensure it is treated as such. Like every piece of the budget, I will review where we must meet those core needs and find funds, via general fund, grants, long term capital improvement or other to balance the budget focusing on core services first.

6. Studies have shown that libraries play an important role in public safety. A well-funded, well-resourced library, serving the diverse needs of each community with programs and resources designed to provide value and impact, are at the heart of neighborhoods with less crime. ***Please explain your understanding of a library's role in public safety, and how would you support further partnerships between public safety officials and the library department?***
Just like the uses for the community we have already discussed, it should also be a place of refuge for our Police. Encouraging areas for police to take breaks, work on reports or eat lunch for example, encourages visible security and it also closes a loop between the public and access to the police. Police are just as important to the fabric of every community as the library.

7. **We welcome any further remarks about your relation to libraries.**
I look forward to regularly meeting with the library staff in my District to best understand the needs of both our libraries, and the community it serves.

From the nearly 600,000 San Diego Public Library card holders, the thousands of Library supporters, and every San Diegan who finds value in the San Diego Public Library, thank you! All the best to you in the coming weeks.

We would be grateful to receive your responses by Oct. 5, 2026. Please send the responses to Patrick Stewart, CEO, Library Foundation SD at pstewart@libraryfoundationsd.org