

**OPTION 4**  
**Explanation of Recommendation**  
**Dated April 4, 2020**

This document provides additional information about Option 4 for enhancing library services in Isla Vista including the other options considered, the details of Option 4, the draft timeline for implementation, and further explanation of the reasons for the staff recommendation.

**Consideration of Other Options**

With the Harwood Process<sup>1</sup> that was recently completed indicating a split preference in Isla Vista between mobile services (44%) and a physical branch (40%), staff developed four service options based on those priorities. Of course, under each of these options, Isla Vista patrons would still be able to access all available materials and services at their regional Main Branch Library in Goleta.

To develop funding requirements for each of the four options, staff reviewed service level requirements (e.g., minimum standards for bookmobiles, small branch libraries), and drew from the Goleta Library Department's own operational costs at the various branches it manages, and those of other libraries providing similar services. For leased space costs, we used actual quotes, where available, and verbal \$/square foot estimates from a contact at the Hayes Commercial Group where actual quotes were not available.

The chart, below, shows the costs and (in red) the funding gap for each option, assuming that state grant funding secured by Assemblymember Limón would provide \$200,000 over a grant period of up to two years, through 03/20/2022. This funding was initially requested for a one-year pilot for a small satellite library, however the State Library (the designated state agency to administer the funds) has assured staff that funding could be applied to any of these options through the full grant cycle.

| Service Option<br>(Total Cost/ <b>Unfunded</b> ) | Year 1                      | Year 2                      | Ongoing Annual              |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Option 1 Bookmobile                              | \$495,222/ <b>\$295,222</b> | \$143,047/ <b>\$143,047</b> | \$143,047/ <b>\$143,047</b> |
| Option 2 Small Branch                            | \$432,336/ <b>\$232,336</b> | \$315,621/ <b>\$315,621</b> | \$315,621/ <b>\$315,621</b> |
| Option 3 Library Room                            | \$252,546/ <b>\$52,546</b>  | \$183,346/ <b>\$183,346</b> | \$183,346/ <b>\$183,346</b> |
| Option 4 Van/Hybrid                              | \$154,196/ <b>\$0</b>       | \$92,306/ <b>\$46,502*</b>  | \$92,306/ <b>\$92,306</b>   |

*(\*Option 4 note: If we could secure a mobile library grant for the van, an additional \$27,292 might be available for the second year.)*

Options 1 (Bookmobile) and 2 (Small Branch), though very attractive, would clearly be too expensive in both the short-term and the long-term, absent crippling cuts to the regional Main Branch Library's funding, a significant long-term additional funding investment from the County or other funding partner, or both.

Option 3 (Library Room) is the most feasible option for a physical location. There are several challenges, beyond the funding shortfall reflected above. First, it would not meet the minimum standards for a small branch library developed by the Santa Barbara County Library Commission in

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<sup>1</sup> The Harwood Process and its results are described more fully in the Staff Reports about this item included on the April 7, 2010 Goleta City Council agenda and on the

terms of physical space, staffing, service and collections. Second, the ability to use the full space, as small as it is to begin with, would be limited by Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. To provide adequate paths of travel and accessible seating for patrons with disabilities, we would be limited to, at maximum, two tables for patrons, 4 computers, and one wall of materials, with no room for programming. It would, in other words, really be just a room.

#### **Details of Option 4**

With Option 4 (Van/Hybrid), we sought to create a hybrid option that would provide the mobile satellite services that we heard that so many Isla Vista patrons prioritized. We would take advantage of indoor and outdoor spaces available throughout the community to provide a full slate of library programming. We also designed this option to provide regular service at fixed locations for those patrons that prioritize the physical location.

Under this option, the Library would purchase a large cargo van with an awning. There would be two dedicated part-time staff to run the program at a combined 40 hours per week. The van would deliver materials to various locations in Isla Vista. It would also provide scheduled opportunities for general staff assistance, computer access, programming and events. In addition to the purchase of the van, Option 4 would involve purchasing 4 library vending machines, 4 book drops, 10 little libraries, license renewals on 2 Pop-Up Library devices to allow downloading e-books without requiring a library card, laptops for the van, and materials for borrowing.

A description of how the Isla Vista community would be served is as follows:

- The fixed-location Book Vending Machines would be at four (4) carefully chosen sites and kept stocked by staff with a rotating selection of popular and patron-requested titles, so that patrons could borrow materials whenever they wanted.



- Four (4) fixed-location book drops would make the return of library books and materials borrowed from the machines, from the van, or from the Main Branch Library simple, and would not require the borrower to have transportation to the Goleta Library.
- There are currently two Pop Up Library downloadable devices at the Isla Vista Community Center and UCSB funded through a short-term grant, and those licenses would be renewed so residents can download and read e-books on a smart phone, e-reader, or other device at no cost with or without a library card.

- Ten (10) fairly large “little libraries” would be installed at housing complexes that have large Latinx populations as well as at other high-use locations. Staff members would re-stock the little libraries regularly, and Spanish language materials would be included.



- Staff would deliver hold requests (made by phone, online, or in person) to various sites on a biweekly basis, including Friendship Manor, IV Elementary School, the Teen Center, and the Community Center.
- Staff would have weekly fixed hours and physical locations (e.g., the Elementary School, the Community Center) where patrons could receive staff assistance, pick up books and holds, be issued library cards via a laptop and Wi-Fi device, and use the computers.
- Staff would use the van to provide a wide array of library programs for Isla Vista residents at the Isla Vista Community Center, Teen Center, IV Elementary School, IV Youth Projects Preschool Program, Friendship Manor (a senior housing development) and other Isla Vista sites, including Story Times, special paid performers, Summer Reading Clubs for children, Winter Reading Clubs for adults, craft programs, and more. Programs will be done both outside and inside appropriate community building spaces.

If successful, and if additional funding could be identified, this model could be expanded to other areas in the regional Main Branch Library's service area that also do not currently have dedicated in-neighborhood service.

### **Timelines**

The State Library requires an immediate answer as to which option the Library wishes to pursue to expend the \$200,000 in state grant funds. Should Option 4 be selected, the Library Director will purchase all materials and hire staff during the summer and early autumn of 2020 with the hopes of beginning to provide service some time around October 2020. Much would need to be done before the van could start making visits: agreements with housing developments and community organizations for the use of space for vending machines, book drops, and little libraries would need to be made; books and other materials must be selected and purchased from library vendors; contracts must be entered into with vendors.

Once service begins, it is likely that the grant would fully fund staff and all other costs until March 2022.

### **Recommendation**

Staff had intended to seek Council's input in mid-March without offering a recommendation on which option to pursue. Several intervening circumstances have led to our recommendation to pursue Option 4:

- At its meeting of March 3, 2020, the Goleta Library Advisory Commission, which includes members who are imbedded in the Isla Vista community in various ways, expressed a strong preference for Option 4 as the best way to meet the diverse needs of the community in a flexible and affordable way;
- The sudden intensification of the global pandemic in the United States and in California led the City Council meeting agenda of March 17, when we had hoped to introduce this item, to be a limited emergency agenda, causing a 3-week delay that now pushes us against the deadline to respond to the State Library about the grant.
- Revenues for the City, and all other local public agencies, are crashing. It is likely that cuts to the regional Main Branch Library in Goleta, which receives a significant subsidy from City of Goleta General Fund revenues, will need to be considered. Diverting any of the funds that support the regional Main Branch Library is not feasible, and other possible funding partners for Isla Vista, such as the County, are not likely to be in a better position. At least in the short-term, additional sources of funding to create a sustainable program are not likely to be identified.
- Only Option 4 offers a fully funded program through the grant secured by Assemblymember Limón in the first year, and even provides partial funding well into the second year. Of course, this assumes that state grant funding will remain available given the current economic crisis.