

**PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program Application  
(Category A)  
Hayward Public Library**

1. One paragraph project summary.

The Hayward Public Library (HPL) has a strong commitment to providing services to our most vulnerable residents, including low-income renters, foreign-born immigrants with limited English-speaking skills, and families with children under the age of 5. We provide a variety of programs at our Downtown and South Hayward libraries and at schools and other locations in Hayward, including bilingual programs (in Spanish and Chinese) and English Conversation Circles. In 2019-20, the HPL proposes an expansion of its mobile services with community-supported “branchlets,” based on the success of the Monterey County Free Library Branchlet program. We propose this pilot program will establish 10 branchlets utilizing Little Free Library book sheds, which will be placed in Hard-to-Count (HTC) census tracts, where fewer residents have active library accounts. We will offer access to free books, pop-up library services at block parties conducted during the peak of Census 2020 promotion (March-May 2020), and information about library and local social services. We will work in partnership with the Chabot College Student Initiative Center, which has a decade-long history of assisting students who are developing passion-based projects to improve their campus and communities. We will also partner with local agencies that are active in the Hayward Promise Neighborhood program. We will expand awareness of library services while promoting delivery of and sharing of books in neighborhoods. The Branchlet program will provide services to residents who have limited access to transportation, which inhibits access to Hayward libraries.

2. Explain how this project fits with the library’s strategic directions.

HPL programs reflect the City of Hayward’s Sanctuary City policy and its community-driven Commitment for an Inclusive, Equitable, and Compassionate Community. In recent years, we have conducted major community-wide reading programs about the immigrant experience, distributing free books in Spanish and English and sponsoring relevant programs, which have resonated with and built trust with our large immigrant populations. This new Branchlet program will expand access to books in a variety of languages spoken by Hayward residents, and will provide new opportunities to raise awareness of free library services available in Downtown and South Hayward.

The proposed Branchlet program also supports the City of Hayward’s Tennyson Thrives program, which is a collaborative effort between community members, Hayward City staff, and the Chabot College Student Initiative Center to create and implement a dynamic vision for the neighborhoods in South Hayward, where many of the branchlets will be placed.

3. A detailed description of the proposed project including the population served and the demographics of that population.

The Hayward Public Libraries are recognized community hubs – in 2017-18, we served 18,585 participants in a total of 502 programs, ranging from early literacy, family, teen, and adults. We anticipate these numbers will significantly grow when the new downtown library attracts an even larger number of visitors who are excited by the new services and 21<sup>st</sup> Century facility. In 2017-18, we had a monthly gate count of 22,515 individuals, which we anticipate will increase significantly in the coming year when the new downtown library opens.

The proposed Branchlet Program will raise awareness of library services available at its new Downtown and existing South Hayward branch. By partnering with agencies that are active in the Hayward Promise Neighborhood program (including Hayward Unified School District, Chabot College; California State University, East Bay; 4Cs of Alameda County; and Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center, Inc.) and other agencies supported by the City of Hayward, (including Downtown Streets, Inc.; and the Hayward Arts Council), we will also promote awareness of a wide range of social services available to Hayward residents.

The Branchlet program will largely rely on volunteer stewards who reflect the diversity of Hayward's immigrant populations, and who will be recruited to provide weekly delivery and monitoring of books, with the supervision and coordination of HPL library staff. The pilot program will coincide with promotion of the Census 2020 in HTC census tracts; HPL submitted an application to the Alameda County Office of the Census for partial support of this program, which would fund a series of block parties from March-May 2020 to promote Census returns and outreach about library services, including the new Branchlet program and future bookmobile services.

The service area is primarily Hayward residents, including census tracts with the highest HTC index (4377.02, 4375, 4377.01, 4362, 4366.02). We will recruit and train volunteer Branchlet stewards who speak in the primary languages present in Hayward, including Spanish, Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Hindi, Portuguese, Punjabi, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

The City of Hayward's Tennyson Thrives initiative, concentrating on engagement and service to South Hayward residents, has tried several formats of engaging residents in civic life and have found that community members who have had limited interaction with the government are most likely to first engage activities that are fun, family-friendly, safe, low-stakes, and in their language. Chabot College's Student Initiative Center's diverse student assistants and classroom contributors, many of whom are from these communities, have also helped first-time resident participants feel at ease. HPL staff are equipped to work collaboratively with Chabot College SIC students, to provide greater access to books and library services.

#### 4. Goals and objectives of the project.

The HPL's Branchlet program will help to address heightened community concerns about equity and inclusion. The Hayward Commitment for Inclusion, Equity, and a Compassionate Community, adopted in 2017, sets forth key guiding principles, including encouraging shared community values; fostering accessibility; dismantling illegal forms of discrimination; and implementing the Hayward Sanctuary City Resolution. As a trusted organization that promotes literacy and lifelong learning, the HPL's Branchlet program will reflect the City of Hayward's

commitment to serving its most vulnerable residents by providing access to educational resources and promoting a sense of belonging.

By partnering with Chabot College's Student Initiative Center (SIC) and other social service agencies, the HPL will increase civic participation, social capital, and neighborhood cohesion in areas of Hayward that have had historically low civic engagement. Chabot College students share the same cultural and language diversity of Hayward residents who face barriers accessing educational and social resources. The Chabot College SIC has had success in sharing their experiences and cultures in fun and creative ways with community members, and will help the HPL Branchlet program be embraced by Hayward residents not already benefiting from library services.

## 5. Project timeline (activities).

### **September-October 2019:**

- Order Branchlet structures and identify Branchlet locations
- Create publicity materials and campaign to promote and evaluate the program

### **September-November 2019:**

- Recruit volunteer Branchlet stewards from among existing library volunteers, Library Commission members, Friends of the Library, Literacy Plus tutors and learners, Chabot College students, Hayward Unified School District, and community agencies and residents
- Develop policies and procedures for weekly book deliveries and monitoring of Branchlets
- Order books in a variety of languages in use by Hayward residents

### **December 2019-February 2020**

- Place Branchlets at 10 locations and begin delivery and monitoring of books, and conduct surveys to evaluate community use and interest in the program

### **March-June 2020**

- Collaborate with Chabot College Student Initiative Center and social service agencies to organize block parties that promote awareness and engagement with neighborhood-based Branchlets, Census 2020 engagement, and library services

### **July-August 2020**

- Evaluate community use and interest in the program and seek partnerships with literacy organizations, neighborhood groups, and funding sources for further implementation of the Branchlet program

## 6. Evaluation of the project.

HPL staff and Branchlet volunteer stewards will conduct simple surveys at the Census 2020 block parties to evaluate neighborhood access of the Branchlets, including desired reading materials and languages of interest. Additionally, the Branchlets will provide library card account applications, and information about library programs. Surveys evaluating the books

provided at the Branchlets will be available for community members to complete, to help Branchlet stewards identify and order books relevant to Hayward residents.

7. Project budget. (Indirect costs are not allowed).

Description	
Staff Time – Librarians (Per Diem, up to 5 hours/week)	4,500
Supplies: 10 Library Branchlets (\$600 each, including materials and installation)	6,000
Books for giveaway at branchlets and block parties	4,000
Marketing	500

8. Sustainability analysis.

The HPL will identify literacy and community-based organizations, including Tandem, Partners for Early Learning, which may be interested in partnering with the HPL for long-term implementation of the Branchlet program. The HPL will find sources for funding access to free new and used books for sustainable program development.