

**Pacific Library Partnership
2019 Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program**

1. Title of Project: Recycle a Bicycle at Your Library

2. Category (A or B): A - PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program

3. Library applying for funding: Oakland Public Library
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4. Amount of funding requested: \$15,000

PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program

Recycle a Bicycle at Your Library

1. One paragraph project summary.

For more than ten years, Oakland Public Library (OPL) has supported and promoted biking through fix-it clinics, workshops with local bike advocacy organization Bike East Bay, bicycling story times and other programming. The library offers pumps and locks for patron use at all locations. OPL also utilizes bikes and bike trailers for outreach efforts. To further promote increased bike use in Oakland, and to encourage the use of low-stress routes and affordable bike transportation to access our library branches, we seek a \$15,000 Pacific Library Partnership Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant. OPL would use this grant to offer more bike tools for checkout, and to provide Earn-A-Bike programs ("Recycle a Bicycle") for adults in East Oakland through a partnership with Cycles of Change, a community-based bicycle education organization. Cycles of Change offers beginners' ride safety training, advanced bicycle adventures, bicycle restoration workshops, and environmental science programs in the East Bay, and the organization has proven curriculum sets already in place. OPL staff have an established, ongoing relationship with this community-based organization through regular bike donation drives and will assist in curriculum refinement. Recycle a Bicycle participants will learn basic bike riding and maintenance skills, get personalized route and riding guidance, and – upon successful completion of the program -- earn a refurbished used bike, helmet, lock, and lights. Participants will also have the opportunity to teach the next cohort of participants, as we further refine the curriculum and dynamically shape the Recycle a Bicycle program.

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

Oakland first adopted a bicycle plan in 1999; this defined a policy vision and established a citywide bikeway network of bike paths, lanes, and routes. In December 2007, the Oakland City Council adopted a *Bicycle Master Plan* as the citywide, long-range policy that promotes bicycling as a viable means of transportation and recreation in Oakland. This year, in 2019, the City Council unanimously adopted *Let's Bike Oakland!*, which updates the Plan with an equity-based framework to provide affordable, safe and healthy mobility for all Oaklanders (<https://www.oaklandca.gov/projects/lets-bike-oakland-oaklands-bike-plan>). The library is named in the plan as a key partner for providing shared resources, and Cycles of Change is also included as a community partner and a major contributor to the plan.

In drafting this updated plan, Oakland's Department of Transportation recognized the unique value of the library in providing biking support for all Oaklanders, particularly in underserved neighborhoods. In Oakland, bicycling infrastructure and bike shops are centered in downtown and north Oakland neighborhoods. There are no bike shops in East Oakland, and the bike share program does not currently support docked bikes in the area. The library is in fact the only source of bike support; currently the library offers fix-it programming at two locations in East Oakland: at the 81st Avenue Branch Library, and -- through a partnership with the Scraper Team at "The Shed" -- at Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch.

OPL has made significant strides in promoting bicycling within Oakland and is recognized as a trusted community resource for promoting equity-based services around bikes. In fact, OPL has met all the goals around promoting biking outlined in a prior PLP grant request in 2015, which put forth the library's goals to increase bike programming for all ages. All library locations are now included in the annual *Walk*

Oakland! Map & Guide, the library regularly partners with local bike advocacy groups, and OPL staff are involved in the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Council.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch hosts "The Shed", a youth-led bike repair shop where you can learn how to repair, tune-up, and decorate your bicycle in original scraper-bike style. The 81st Avenue Branch also supports a weekly fix-it program. All OPL branches are equipped with bike locks and tire pumps for public use; the 81st Ave Branch and the Oakland Tool Lending Library have public bike repair stations. In addition, OPL's branches host frequent Urban Cycling 101 classes, Bike Month in May, and the monthly Women Bike Book Club. The library has launched a mobile collection, the Bike O'Zines Oakland (BOZO) collection of community-donated zines. Additionally, OPL has three bike libraries (nimble outreach trailers that attach to e-assist bikes and cargo bikes) for attending various neighborhood events. The library is also a key partner in extending shared mobility services across Oakland; four branches currently register patrons for the discounted BikeShareforAll program as an alternative to credit-card based online sign-ups.

This grant would allow for deeper engagement with patrons to provide bike tools for check-out at all locations, as well as individualized biking support and education for at least 30 adult patrons with the Recycle a Bicycle at Your Library program. This hyper-personalized support to increase bike ridership is a pilot program that can be replicated by developing a best practices curriculum and toolkit for other organizations to follow.

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

The Oakland Public Library serves the diverse population of 443,029 in Oakland, Emeryville and Piedmont. According to 2016 U.S. Census estimates, the City of Oakland (420,005) is ethnically and culturally diverse (28% White, 26% Hispanic or Latino, 23% Black or African American, 16% Asian, 6% two or more races, and 1% other). In the neighborhood immediately surrounding the Main Library (in zip code 94612), 23% of residents have a disability. 31% of people living in this zip code are foreign-born, 40% speak a language other than English at home, and 30% live below the poverty level.

According to the *Let's Bike Oakland* plan, "Biking today in Oakland is fun, it's brave, it's necessary, and a lot of people want to bicycle more often." In fact, bicycles are an ideal transportation mode for trips within urban areas such as Oakland. 85% of Oakland residents live within two miles of downtown or a major transit station; this equates to a generally flat and easy twelve-minute bike ride. On average, the U.S. Census and BART Station Profile Study revealed that 5% of Oaklanders bike to work regularly, and data from surveys that informed the *Let's Bike Oakland* plan show that 5% of Oaklanders consider the bicycle their main form of transportation and 6% consider it an additional form of transportation. Moreover, many more Oaklanders (around 20%) bike at least once a month for their transportation needs, and 6 in 10 Oaklanders want to bike more.

However, as the *Let's Bike Oakland* plan outlines, there are socioeconomic, cultural, and discriminatory barriers people face to access bicycling. For example, all over Oakland, Black bicyclists are being stopped by the Police Department at higher rates than other racial groups. Actively promoting increased bike usage in vulnerable communities and offering individual ride support on best practices are some opportunities to address this issue. Also, bikeways and infrastructure developments have not been equally distributed throughout Oakland; most low stress bike routes are in the Downtown and North Oakland/Adams Point areas. Only 2% of streets in Central/East Oakland are low stress bikeways, compared to 25% of Downtown streets.

While equitable infrastructure improvements are ongoing and critical, the *Let's Bike Oakland* plan emphasizes that "Creating a more bicycle friendly Oakland means investing not only in new infrastructure, but also community-led ongoing programs that encourage bicycling." Oaklanders want bike maintenance resources to be more available and affordable to decrease barriers to biking, and OPL locations are named as a key shared resource for this effort, building on established programming and success.

Since the prior PLP grant that focused on bikes in 2015, OPL has expanded and systemized its bicycle promotion efforts. The library partners regularly with biking advocacy organizations, including Bike East Bay, Walk Oakland Bike Oakland, and the City of Oakland's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission. OPL is a regular feature at two major annual events that promote biking: PedalFest at Jack London Square in the summer, and Bike to Work Day in May. OPL staff are ride leaders for the Oakland Museum of California's Bike Tripper tours program, which has two separate bike tours on the history of Middle Harbor and the history of Downtown. OPL hosts the monthly Women Bike Book Club in partnership with Bike East Bay. The Main Library supports an ongoing bike drive to collect used bike donations for Cycles of Change. This year, OPL co-sponsored the CycloFemme group ride up the Bay Bridge on Mother's Day, followed by brunch. These programs are replicated and expand each year, as interest from the community grows along with bike ridership.

The library currently provides the only source of consistent and ongoing bike support in East Oakland; Cycles of Change operates a community bike shop, but the hours and services are extremely limited. The work at 81st Ave and Martin Luther King, Jr. Branches, described on pages 1-2, and the bike repair tools we loan from the Tool Lending Library help meet a critical need in this neighborhood. We are hoping that this grant will enable us to do even more and to amplify the work that Cycles of Change is doing.

This PLP grant funding would allow OPL to expand and grow the circulation of bike tools, as well as to pursue a parallel track for promoting biking in Oakland: A hyper-personalized programmatic approach to expanding bike ownership, one patron at a time. OPL will work with Cycles of Change to deliver regular, on-going classes on road safety and bike maintenance at East Oakland branches, and will collaborate to offer personalized route recommendations and ride-a-longs with experienced riders between library branches. Curriculum will be tailored to meet individual needs and interests. Participants in the Recycle a Bicycle program will earn the bikes they have refurbished -- along with a helmet, lights, and a lock -- at the end of the class. Refurbishing a used bike teaches participants valuable bike maintenance skills, and participants will have the opportunity to mentor the next cohort, following the successful "each one teach one" model.

This one-on-one approach mimics other successful service models in library settings, such as adult literacy, technology literacy, or readers advisory services, and highlights the unique role that public libraries have in the community as a trusted source of information of all kinds. Our timeline allows for feedback and refinement of the curriculum before its second iteration, allowing the library to fully develop a curriculum and best practices toolkit that may easily be replicated by other libraries.

4. The goals and objectives of the project.

Oakland's *Let's Bike Oakland* plan specifies the following vision: *Oakland will be a bicycle-friendly city where bicycling provides affordable, safe and healthy mobility for all Oaklanders. New projects and programs will work to enhance existing communities and their mobility needs.* Specifically, the library is named as a resource in the Plan to provide "bike repair, maintenance, and education...[at] concrete

locations for services (distributed throughout Oakland) that are free of charge and accessible to the entire public.”

Oakland has met its prior objective to become a Bicycle Friendly Community, as recognized by the League of American Bicyclists. Oakland enjoys a Gold ranking and is now striving for Platinum. (The Bicycle Friendly Community Campaign is a national program to evaluate and award municipalities for actively promoting bicycling; there are currently only five communities that meet the rigorous criteria of an average ridership of 13.6% needed for Platinum status.)

OPL’s mission is to empower “all people to explore, connect, and grow”, and our vision is to be an “indispensable partner in transforming lives.” Providing bike repair tools for check-out along with one-on-one bike support fits solidly within that mission and vision. OPL seeks to support the broader goals of the *Let’s Bike Oakland* plan by creating programming and resources to attract at least 30 new people to cycling for transportation, recreation, environmental sustainability, financial savings, and fitness by offering a free bike, accessories, and personalized support and follow-up through the library. PLP funding would allow OPL the following programmatic support:

- Recycle a Bicycle Program: Provide personalized biking support to patrons, including a fully equipped bike and accessories, to at least 30 adult patrons across two iterations of the curriculum.
- Expand Bike Tools Circulation: Offer bike repair kits at all locations for patrons to check out.
- Let’s Bike Oakland at OPL: Continue to grow the library’s existing bike programming efforts by adding at least one annual bike event per year.

According to the *Let’s Bike Oakland* plan, people need instruction and encouragement from culturally relevant programs; the library has partnered with other agencies to offer such programming, and the PLP funding would amplify the efforts of a local, community-based organization to deliver personalized biking support to individuals. Another barrier that the plan addresses is disparate access to comfortable riding infrastructure; increasing community rides and bike expertise within our branches addresses this need, encourages bike access to library locations, and grows the library’s role in promoting and normalizing biking.

The following goals from *Let’s Bike Oakland* plan will inform and direct our program focus: access, health and safety, affordability, and collaboration. Specifically, OPL will:

- Continue to offer access to bike education resources and shared mobility programs. **(Access)**
- Provide route maps to encourage biking throughout Oakland. Work with partners to provide more group rides that focus on accessing libraries. **(Health and Safety)**
- Increase free bike tool check-outs and basic repair services, including fix-it stations. Offer 30 patrons the opportunity to earn a bike and accessories through participation in the PLP-funded bike education and support program. **(Affordability)**
- Work with community partners to promote biking. Offer craft programs to create luggage carriers and other accessories for better riding experiences; encourage the use of cargo bikes for delivery operations to normalize using bikes for freight. **(Collaboration)**

5. The project timeline (activities).

Activity	Jan-Feb	Mar-Apr	May	Jun-Jul	Aug	Sep 2020
Finalize participant recruitment strategies and select 15 participants.	X					
Schedule classes with Cycles of Change.	X					
Purchase and catalog bike tools to circulate at pilot locations.	X					
Add more branches as BikeShareForAll sign-up sites.	X					
Provide Recycle a Bicycle classes over two months with Cycles of Change at the Bikery or at select East Oakland branches.		X				
Pilot bike repair tools check-out at East Oakland branches.		X				
Evaluation: Check in with program participants on bike ridership.			X			
Evaluation: Gauge how many patrons who earned bikes participate in Bike to Work Day efforts.			X			
Refine the curriculum based on participant feedback.				X		
Plan at least two group rides with partners to loop in program participants.				X		
Provide another iteration of the program, with prior participants included as trainers.					X	X
Finalize a best practices toolkit for offering this curriculum and share with other libraries.						X
Extend bike tools check-out to all locations.						X
Continue to support on-going bike programming at various locations throughout OPL	X	X	X	X	X	X
Continue to attend festivals and events with the Bike Library fleet	X	X	X	X	X	X

6. The evaluation of the project.

Usage statistics will be gathered by collecting the following information:

- Of patrons that earn bikes, how many use their bikes regularly and/or join group rides? Regular and on-going check-ins with each patron
- How many use bikes to get to various library locations?
- Circulation rates of bike tools at pilot locations
- Circulation rates of materials (books, DVDs, etc.) about biking
- The number of followers for the OPL Bike Library twitter account

7. The project budget.

Expenses

Curriculum development and delivery from a partner community agency, and 30 used bikes to refurbish during the program	\$14,000
Purchase pilot bike repair kits for circulation	\$1,000
Purchasing helmets, locks, lights, and incentives for completing program surveys	\$2,000

Total Expenses: \$17,000

Income

PLP Innovation and Technology Grant	\$15,000
Friends of the Oakland Public Library	\$2,000

Total Income: \$17,000

In-Kind Support: Staffing, materials purchase, bike tool kits purchase for pilot branches; a potential funder has also been identified for funding bike repair kits.

8. Staffing

The project, which has the full support of Oakland Public Library administration, will be spearheaded by Supervising Librarian, Mana Tominaga. Ms. Tominaga has twelve years of experience as a librarian and started at OPL in June 2013. Prior to joining OPL, she worked for San Jose Public Library; her last role was as senior librarian of the e-branch, with oversight of all digital services. Ms. Tominaga currently supervises the Main Library at OPL, which houses large collections of more than 350,000 reference and circulating non-fiction and fiction books, and she leads the e-resources team as well. Ms. Tominaga is a passionate and experienced bicyclist.

Assisting Ms. Tominaga are Emily Weak and Anthony Propernick.

Ms. Weak is a senior librarian in Adult Services at OPL, where she enjoys focusing on outreach, partnerships with social service organizations, and the 600s. She has also worked for Mountain View Public Library, San Jose Public Library, Stanford Math-Stat Library, and the California Academy of Sciences (Naturalist Center Library). Prior to becoming a librarian, she was variously: a circus student, a cheesemonger, and a grocery store manager. Pretty much the only legacies from her past are a love of good food (especially cheese) and a decent back bend. Ms. Weak lives in Oakland with two adorable cats and an equally adorable boyfriend. One thing she really loves about her life is being able to bike to work.

Mr. Propernick is a bike junky, advocate, and self-taught mechanic. He loves everything bike-related and loves to help others cultivate their interest and access to bike use. In addition to his duties as a Senior Library Assistant, Mr. Propernick has developed and coordinated bike-related programs and services with OPL. In 2014, he started fixing flat tires at the 81st Ave Branch Library, a joint public/school facility that now hosts a weekly bike repair clinic. Bike repair services help OPL attract youth who wouldn't normally come to the library, he says. "We are reaching a group in our community in a new way...that is relevant to them and values them by addressing their needs and interests.... Once they're here, we can build relationships and offer other services." Between 20 and 40 youth and adults attend the clinics and more than 500 bikes have been repaired and thousands of flats fixed.