



MEMORANDUM

Date: December 18, 2025

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Gerry Beaudin, City Manager
Heidi Murphy, Director of Library and Recreation

Subject: Update on Budget Reduction Implementation – Library and Recreation Department

This memo provides an update to the City Council on the implementation of adjustments to Library and Recreation services, including their impacts and adaptations.

In total, the Library and Recreation budget was reduced by \$1.61M in FY 2025/26, including the elimination of 6.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) and 21 part-time (PT) employee positions from the budget. An additional 2 FTE were frozen in the FY 2024/25 budget and were also not included in the FY 2025/26 budget.

LIBRARY SERVICES

The library continues to adjust services to adapt to reduced staffing. Over the remainder of this budget cycle and as part of the City's organizational assessment, staff will continue to work within the available funding levels. In the meantime, the following is a list of the recent budget reduction implementation work:

- **Volunteer Shelving Program:** Since launching on June 24, 2025, the volunteer shelving program has become a cornerstone of daily operations. To date, 96 individuals have attended orientation sessions, with 62 active volunteers now shelving approximately 95 percent of the library's materials. As of mid-November, volunteers contributed 1,094 hours to shelving operations, with feedback from both volunteers and staff being overwhelmingly positive.

While highly successful, the volunteer shelving program requires approximately 50 staff hours weekly for supervision, coordination, and processing—higher than initially anticipated. In addition, only approximately 40 percent of initial volunteer applicants complete the full application, fingerprinting, and training process. The six-month volunteer commitment requires ongoing recruitment and training, and shelving accuracy continues to improve.

- **Staffing:** Staff vacancies have been partially offset through the consolidation of supervisory structures, reduced commission meetings under the new bimonthly cycle, and the pausing of certain commissions. Reduced staffing levels have created pinch points on Mondays and Saturdays, occasionally requiring temporary service desk closures to ensure proper coverage. However, most patrons have been understanding and patient during brief service adjustments.

- **Hours of Operation:** Library hours were reduced from 62 to 48 hours per week, effective August 4, 2025. The community has adjusted well to the new schedule, though visitor counts have decreased somewhat. Staff will continue to monitor usage trends as the community adjusts to the new schedule and more programs return in the new year.
- **Focus on Core Programming:** Adult and children's programming now focus exclusively on literacy and educational programs, which continue to be well-attended and valued by the community, maintaining the library's commitment to its essential mission.
- **Other Program Changes:**
 - The Afterschool Program now operates from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. daily (reduced by one hour). All PUSD support of this program was eliminated with the district budget reductions beginning this current school year (2025/26), so this program is now supported entirely by City staff.
 - Sensory Storytime is temporarily paused until January while staff receive necessary training.
 - Adult Film and Book Clubs are paused indefinitely.
 - City staff-led school field trips are paused for the current school year (schools remain welcome to visit independently).
- **Collection Management:**
 - Checkout limits were reduced from 100 to 50 items per patron, aligning with industry best practices.
 - Hold requests were limited to items currently checked out.
 - Digital collections were streamlined based on cost, usage, and quality metrics. Fourteen digital resources continue, including the most popular platforms.

CIVIC ARTS

- **Digital Ticketing at Firehouse Arts Center:** The transition to digital ticketing at the Firehouse Arts Center has been smooth and well-received. Patrons may now display tickets digitally or print them at home. To enhance accessibility, ticket sales are available through the library's recreation counter, and beginning in November, in-person sales expanded to the Pleasanton Senior Center.
- **Focus on enhanced revenue and attendance:** Other enhancements/improvements at the Firehouse Arts Center include:
 - Partnering with a booking contractor with decades of industry experience to curate performers with a strong track record in the venue, with an emphasis on tribute bands that consistently draw large audiences
 - Negotiating modified artist guarantees and offering a sell-out bonus, creating an incentive for artists to actively promote their shows, increase attendance, and reduce upfront costs for the City
 - Prioritizing increased rentals to support long-term revenue growth
 - Expanding marketing efforts through earlier and more consistent promotion, improved digital advertising, and broader audience outreach
 - Securing a concessionaire for Presenting Series shows and implementing a new agreement in which the City receives ten percent of concession sales, establishing a new and sustainable revenue stream.

- **Public Art Maintenance:** Reductions to the public artwork maintenance contract are being closely monitored. No significant decline or damage has occurred to date. Staff is engaging with conservators to explore a volunteer-based maintenance Day of Service to help sustain the collection over the long term.

SPORTS AND AQUATICS

- **Aquatics:** Weekend lap swim hours at the Dolores Bengtson Aquatic Center (DBAC) were reduced during non-peak hours (one hour each on Saturday and Sunday), and the recreational swim season was aligned with traditional summer programming. Year-round weekend lap swim participation has decreased by approximately 10 percent due to reduced hours. It is too soon to tell if this reduction will continue. Staff will evaluate after a full fiscal year to determine any long-term impacts.
- **Sports and Facilities:** Adult sports leagues are no longer operated by City staff; fields remain available for private league or game rentals. Field space previously allocated to adult sports leagues is now being used primarily by youth sports teams, ensuring continued high usage.

SENIOR CENTER AND RADD

No notable changes were made to programs and services in these areas.

ACTIVITIES GUIDE

The department has transitioned from producing three Activity Guides each year to two, a change that reduces printing and mailing costs while streamlining production. Spring/Summer 2026 will be the first combined guide, supported by a coordinated outreach and marketing plan to ensure strong visibility and engagement across the community.

OTHER STAFFING CHANGES

Changes to staffing has optimized service delivery across recreation facilities. Staff have been relocated between Gingerbread Preschool, the Senior Center, Ken Mercer Sports Park, the Library, and aquatic programs.

There are currently no City staff assigned to work in Human Services. Staff in the City Manager's Office, Police Department, and Library and Recreation Department are currently managing issues as they arise.

YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT DAY

Staff is coordinating with the Pleasanton Unified School District and the Youth Commission to implement a more efficient format for this program that reduces staff time and departmental coordination while maintaining meaningful civic engagement for local high school students.

COMMUNITY GRANTS

The Community Grants program for youth and arts was eliminated in this budget cycle. General Fund support for Housing and Human Services Grants was reduced to \$100,000.

COMMISSION STRUCTURE

The Civic Arts and Human Services Commissions are currently paused. A City Council Ad-Hoc Subcommittee was formed to review the commission structure.

PLEASANTON PIONEER CEMETERY

Contractor support for the Pleasanton Pioneer Cemetery is being reviewed and reduced in accordance with City Council direction. Beginning January 1, 2026, department staff will assume responsibility for plot and service sales, as well as burial service scheduling, which is currently handled by an outside contractor. Staff is currently reviewing and negotiating terms with the only contractor who submitted a proposal for cemetery maintenance and grave-digging services. Casket plot and service sales will pause effective January 1, 2026, while staff continue to work toward a sustainable service model for the cemetery. An update will be brought to the City Council in the first half of 2026.

ADDITIONAL CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL EFFICIENCIES

- **Citywide Sponsorships:** Centralized management of citywide sponsorship opportunities streamlines the process for community partners and businesses while creating more consistent internal protocols.
- **Citywide Special Event Process:** The City launched a new citywide special event approval and support process, improving communication and efficiency.

The City continues to adapt thoughtfully to budget constraints while maintaining core services. The strong volunteer response is helping the City to preserve valued public services. Staff will continue to monitor impacts and adjust operations as needed.