

PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program Application (Category A)

1. One paragraph project summary.

San José Public Library (SJPL) will install and maintain five [ChargeTech 8-bay cell phone charging lockers](#) at library branches in high need areas of San José. These secure public device charging stations will provide safe, reliable access to phone charging, thereby ensuring that library users have access to communication. These charging stations are unique in that they allow the user to secure their phone in a locked compartment while it is charging. Currently SJPL users plug in their phones and other devices wherever they find a power outlet, often leaving their phones unattended and vulnerable to theft. Library users who are unstably housed or experiencing homelessness often have no other place to charge their phone, cutting them off from emergency communication and information. Students also need a safe place to charge their phones, so they have reliable access.

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

This project meets three of SJPL's five strategic priorities. It will enhance access to library resources, connect the community to high-quality opportunities and tools for learning, and will ensure libraries and services are safe, efficient, and welcoming. The charging stations will provide secure sites for phone charging while allowing users to spend time exploring the library's physical and digital resources via public access computers and branch library collections. These device charging stations will enhance safety at the locations as there will be fewer opportunities for theft of unattended cell phones. Additionally, devices are currently often plugged into floor outlets, where a metal plate must be lifted out of the way to access the plug. Those metal plates and the cords create tripping hazards for library users. This safety issue will be reduced or eliminated with the addition of charging lockers.

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

The secure charging stations will be installed in the following five branch libraries: Bascom, Biblioteca Latinoamericana, Edenvale, Educational Park, and Tully Community. Briefly, the branches can be described as follows:

Bascom

50% Latino, 9% Asian, 37% white, 3% black; Median Income \$77,103

Bascom Branch, in west-central San José, is home to one of the City's Overnight Warming Locations, and many of the library's users are people who are experiencing homelessness. The branch is located near the County's public hospital and a large high school. This branch is also a joint facility with a Community Center, bringing in a diverse set of users.

Biblioteca Latinoamericana

62% Latino, 13% Asian, 39% white, 4% black; Median income \$76,250

Biblioteca Latinoamericana is located in the City's urban core and is heavily used by families as well as people experiencing homelessness. The branch is located near a community center and an elementary school. This area is a known gang hotspot and local residents face many challenges accessing resources.

Edenvale

43% Latino, 32% Asian, 18% white, 2% black; Median income \$83,604

Edenvale is a diverse neighborhood in southeast San José. The branch is located across the street from a rail corridor, and there are many people experiencing homelessness in the area, as evidenced by numerous encampments. The library's users come from these and other backgrounds.

Educational Park

36% Latino, 54% Asian, 8% white, 2% black; Median income \$76,649

Educational Park Branch is located in northeast San José. The branch is situated on the campus of Independence High School, a large campus with 3000+ students. Several other schools surround the library, and the branch is heavily used by students. The library is next to a large park and many people experiencing homelessness are regular library users.

Tully Community

32% Latino, 61% Asian, 6% white, 1% black; Median income \$60,738

The Tully Community library is located in east San José next to a busy complex of ballfields and adjacent to Coyote Creek. The creek area is home to many encampments and makeshift dwellings, and people experiencing homelessness make up a large proportion of the branch's users. The library currently has outreach workers from PATH (People Assisting the Homeless) onsite twice a month to provide support and resources. The branch is also heavily used by recent immigrants and families with young children.

City of San José overall

33% Latino, 33% Asian, 28% white, 3% black; Median income \$84,647

These libraries are located in areas of San José of high need, with median incomes below the citywide average. Most of these areas have experienced a surge in users who are experiencing homelessness. In the most recent count of homeless people in

San José, conducted in May 2019, there were 6,172 individuals counted, an increase of 42% over the 2017 count. Encampments and evidence of lodging on library property at the identified branches point to a need for increased services and resources in these areas. By providing secure charging space for these users' cell phones, the library will help meet a basic need. Existing partnerships, such as with PATH, help identify and provide resources to these individuals, and staff will seek to develop additional partnerships to provide further assistance. Branches located near high schools also have seen a great need for space for students to charge their phones. These secure charging spaces would meet an expressed need in these locations.

4. Goals and objectives of the project.

The goal of this project is to provide space for secure cell phone charging in San José Public Libraries. This project fits into the strategic priorities of SJPL to enhance access, connect the community, and ensure the library is safe and welcoming.

Objective 1: Increase awareness and use of library resources by PATH clients.

Objective 2: Establish one additional partnership with an agency providing services to individuals experiencing homelessness.

Objective 3: Reduce incidence of phone theft due to unattended phones left to charge.

Objective 4: Reduce incidence of tripping and accidents caused by outlet covers and cords impeding walkways in the library.

5. Project timeline (activities).

October 2019

- Meet with Library facilities manager to finalize placement of charging lockers
- Meet with Library marketing team to design locker branding and promotion plan

November 2019

- Order, receive, and install charging lockers

December 2019 through January 2020

- Train staff in use and promotion of charging lockers
- Collaborate with PATH and other community partners on outreach to people experiencing homelessness

January 2020 and beyond

- Promote charging lockers to library users and non-users
- Coordinate with PATH and other partners to promote charging lockers and provide additional services to people experiencing homelessness.

6. Evaluation of the project.

This project will be evaluated by analyzing usage statistics of the charging lockers. Branch staff, PATH staff, and staff of new partner organizations will provide information about usage and reception of the charging lockers. Branch staff will continue to record incidents of theft and accident and data will be compared with earlier statistics.

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

Charging Lockers \$9,458.38

8 Bay Pin Code Charging Locker <i>5 at \$1,795.00 each</i>	\$8,975.00
TAX	830.19
DISCOUNT 10%	-897.50
SHIPPING	550.69
TOTAL	\$9,458.38

Custom branding \$500.00
 Installation \$1000.00
 Electrical (Bascom) \$1500.00

TOTAL: \$12,458.38

8. Sustainability analysis.

The units will be quite simple to maintain. Promotion of the charging lockers will be ongoing and the devices will be inspected by branch staff on a regular basis to ensure they are in good working order. Staff will also communicate regularly with individuals using the charging lockers to promote and provide additional library resources. PATH will continue outreach at the Tully Library and staff will continue to foster this relationship. Other branches will work to develop new partnerships with other agencies. If this project is successful, the SJPL will seek to purchase and install these charging lockers at other locations in the library system.