

PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program Application

Library Name: Contra Costa County Public Library

Project Title: Secure Charging at Contra Costa County Public Library

Select category you are applying under:

Category A: Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant

Category B: Grant Replication Program

If Category B is selected, enter the name of the grant you are replicating:

Secure Charging at SJPL

1. Please provide a one paragraph project summary.

This project will allow installation and maintenance of 4 ChargeTech 8-bay cell phone charging and UVC Disinfection lockers (with stands) at library branches in high need areas of Contra Costa County. 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. In addition, the phones will also be disinfected using UVC light. Currently Contra Costa County Library users plug in their phones and other devices wherever they find a power outlet or at unsecured power towers, 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 fits into the strategic goals of Contra Costa County as following:

Goal 2: the library ensures easy, equitable access to library services for all Contra Costa County residents.

Objective A: Expand services to identified underserved populations a minimum of 10 percent.

Goal 3: The library delivers a consistent, high-quality, and inviting experience at all points of contact.

Objective C: Create a long-term vision for library facilities to serve evolving community needs and address equity of resources.

Objective D: Explore and implement technology to enhance the customer experience.

3. Please provide 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 four branch libraries: San Pablo, Concord, Antioch, and Pittsburg.

These branches and their communities can be described as follows:

San Pablo:

60.1% Latinx or Hispanic, 17.2% Asian, 11.3% Black, 7.7% White

Poverty: 16.3%

Median Household Income: \$53,198

The San Pablo Library is in the far western portion of Contra Costa County and has a population of approximately 32,127 according to the 2020 Census. The library is near one middle school and Contra Costa College. Over 90% of San Pablo school children qualify for free or reduced school meals. The library serves free afterschool meals and hosts a weekly community food program. Many patrons experiencing homelessness use the library to charge devices and locate food and resources. The library works closely with CORE and White Pony Express to provide supplies and services to our patrons experiencing homelessness.

Concord:

29.9% Latinx, 3.4% Black, 12.6% Asian, and 48.6% White

Persons in poverty 9.8%,

Median Household Income: \$89,564

The Concord Library is centrally located in Contra Costa County's most populous city, Concord (pop 130,559). According to Contra Costa County's Point in Time study, in 2020 Concord had 160 unsheltered individuals, roughly 10% of the County's entire unsheltered population in the study. In partnership with the Contra Costa Council on Homelessness, Continuum of Care, and Shelter Inc., the Library provides services to the unsheltered community, including a long-running monthly homeless engagement program called Coffee and Conversations. The Library is located next to City Hall and serves many veterans as well as many unsheltered individuals.

Antioch:

33.2% Latinx, 21.5% Black, 11.7% Asian, and 27.8% White
Median Income \$76,601
Persons in poverty 13.9%

Antioch Library, in the Eastern portion of Contra Costa County and the 2nd largest city in the County. The library is located near one of the two public high schools and across the street from one of the middle schools. The library's users are diverse and include people experiencing homelessness as well as students. Historically we have had a strong relationship with the County Continuum of Care program and held monthly programs to link people experiencing homelessness with local resources. Once in person programming is re-instated we hope to host this program again.

Pittsburg:

43.4% Latinx, 15.4% Black, 16.7% Asian, and 19.1% White,
Median Household Income \$74,459.
Persons in poverty % 12.9

The Pittsburg Library is located in east Contra Costa County next to the city offices, a county courthouse, ballpark fields, and an eBART station. Several people experiencing homelessness frequent the Pittsburg Library to use library computers, charge their phones, and use the restroom facilities. There are makeshift dwellings near the eBART station and library staff find evidence of people sleeping overnight on library grounds on an almost daily basis. Patrons of the courthouse rely on the library as a place to wait on breaks from jury duty as well as to do research for court-related business. In addition to patrons experiencing homelessness and courthouse users, the library sees a number of patrons who use the library every day for several hours at a time for their technology needs (mainly the Wi-Fi or the library computers). The City of Pittsburg is made up of a rich, diverse population, and a 2019 US Census QuickFacts estimates that roughly 49.9% of the population speak a language other than English at home. Families from the community use the library to help their children check out materials and to experience programs that support literacy efforts.

Contra Costa County, Overall:

White 42.7% Latinx 26% Black 9.5% Asian 18.3%
Median Household Income: \$99,716
Percent of persons in poverty: 7.9%

These libraries are located in areas of Contra Costa County with high need, and median incomes below county wide average. Most of these areas have experienced a surge in users who are experiencing homelessness due the 2020-21 Pandemic. In the most recent count of persons experiencing homelessness in Contra Costa County in 2020, 2,277 individuals were counted. By providing secure charging space for these users' cell phones, the library will help meet a basic need. Existing partnerships with agencies such as CORE, White Pony Express, Shelter, Inc, and

Monument Crisis Center will help identify and provide resources to these individuals, and staff will seek to develop additional partnerships with other organizations to provide further assistance. Branches located near 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. What are the goals and objectives of the project?

The goal of this project is to provide space for secure cell phone charging in Contra Costa County Public Libraries. This project meets three of Contra Costa County's 2 strategic goals and three objectives. 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 utilizing the library's physical and digital resources via public access computers and 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, in some of the County's branch locations, devices plugged into walls or floors create tripping hazards. This safety issue will be reduced or eliminated with the addition of charging lockers.

5. Please include your project timeline (include detail of activities).

November 2021

- Meet with Library branch managers and automation staff to finalize placement of charging lockers
- Meet with Library marketing team to design locker branding and promotion plan

December 2021

- Order, receive, and install charging lockers January 2022 through February 2022
- Train staff in use and promotion of charging lockers
- Collaborate with community partners on outreach to people experiencing homelessness

February 2022 and beyond

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

6. Please indicate how you will evaluate success of your project.

This project will be evaluated by analyzing usage statistics of the charging lockers. Branch staff, CORE 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. Please detail your project budget. (Note: Indirect costs are not allowed).

8 bay Pin Code Lockers	\$ 1,595.00	4	\$ 6,380.00
misc (cords, installation)			\$ 260.00
stands	\$ 240.00	4	\$ 960.00
shipping			\$ 500.00
tax (est)			\$ 760.00
unit branding			\$ 240.00
total			\$ 9,100.00

8. Please indicate how the project will be sustained after the grant term is over.

Maintenance of the units should be simple. Units will be checked regularly by staff, and promotion will be ongoing. Staff will also inform the public about the lockers and their use in directional and reference transactions.

Complete Only for Category B Grants:

9. Explain what grant was selected to replicate and why.

We are electing to replicate the 2019 grant awarded to San Jose Public Library: *Secure Charging at SJPL*. The reason we are looking to replicate this grant is fulfill our Strategic Goal 3, deliver a consistent high-quality, and inviting experience at all points of contact. By leveraging current technology we can improve the lives and library experience of persons in our communities who are experiencing homelessness, or for students in need of devices while away from home. Staff in the libraries referred to in this proposal frequently find themselves unable to safely and efficiently provide much needed charging and device storage for persons who are unhoused. This need has should be addressed as access to internet and communication is a basic human right.

10. If there are changes or enhancements to the original grant, including budgetary changes, please detail the changes and your rationale for making them.

The grant for Contra Costa County will contain fewer units. While Contra Costa County will be branding the units for our branches, we will not be installing the units into our walls and will be



using a stand instead. This will also eliminate the need for electrical system changes in our facilities.