EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH
LIBRARY
7711 Goodwood Boulevard
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806

January 2, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: Metropolitan Council Members

FROM: Katrina Stokes, Library Director

RE: 2025 Special Election for Renewal of East Baton Rouge Parish Library Ad Valorem Tax

RECOMMENDATION

That the Metropolitan Council authorize a special election to be held on October 11, 2025, for the submittal to the voters in the Parish of East Baton Rouge, State of Louisiana, the renewal of 10.5 mills ad valorem tax, for a period of ten years.

BACKGROUND

This is a renewal at a lower millage rate. We asked for 11.5 in 1995, 2005 and 2015. This is the sole revenue for your award-winning East Baton Rouge Parish Library System.

The 10.5 mils will generate sufficient funding to operate all 15 locations, seven days a week with no diminishment of service. We are able to ask for a lower rate because we have finished all major capital improvement projects in the 30-year Capital Improvement Plan. These funds will also implement the next phase of the Facilities Master Plan, including the improvements/renovations necessary to protect the public's investment and the planning of a START branch in South Baton Rouge, while also accounting for inflation of local construction costs (5% - 29.22%).

The Library has maintained a Pay-As-You-Go Capital Improvements Plan (CIP); we constructed our attractive and well-used locations with no bonds or indebtedness. With the 10.5 mils, the Library will continue this practice and enable us to continue the much-needed improvements, such as the planned renovation of the Scotlandville branch.

Thoughtful planning and careful savings allowed the Library to accelerate several projects on the CIP, such as Zachary, Fairwood, and the soon-to-be opened South Branch.

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Mission: The Library is a community service organization that provides access and connects people to information, resources, materials, technology, and experiences to make a positive difference in their lives.

With careful planning and feedback from our community stakeholders, we are addressing our community's needs for meeting spaces (in high demand among local business owners, various charitable and local-interest groups, tutors, etc.), concerns regarding the crime rate (access to social workers, programs for learning/updating vocational skills), supporting economic development (career counseling, small business services), supporting civic engagement (hosting town hall meetings, voter registration), education (early literacy support, supplemental reading and homework assistance for school-age children, and materials for life-long learning at all ages), and addressing social concerns, such as health and wellness, food security, consumer education, community engagement, and more.

The East Baton Rouge Parish Library has measurable impacts on the lives of the individuals and families that make up our community.

We will have more information regarding our fiscal projections as it becomes available to us as we work with the Assessor.

Your favorable consideration of this request will be appreciated.

Respectfully,

Katrina Stokes
Library Director

CC/JJF/csd
Attachment
xc: Charlie Davis, Chief Administrative Officer
Ashley Beck, Council Administrator/Treasurer
Candace Temple, President of the EBRPL Board of Control