

MARCH 12, 2024



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To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Councilmember Sophie Hahn
 Subject: Creating **SHARE BERKELEY** - A Berkeley Public Library **Share Hub** for **Access, Resilience, and Equity**

RECOMMENDATION

1. Request that the Library Director work with Library Staff to develop a visionary plan to expand the Berkeley Public Library's Tool Lending Library into a comprehensive, full-service **SHARE** hub for the City of Berkeley, providing a one-stop center for community members to:
 - a. Borrow from an expanded portfolio of Library-based tools, supplies, equipment and other durable/reusable items;
 - b. Access comprehensive, up-to-date information and referrals about community-based opportunities for borrowing, renting, or obtaining free tools, supplies, equipment, bikes/vehicles, locations, and similar resources; and
 - c. Receive need-based financial assistance to support access to community-based share/rental resources.
2. Consider categories of items that might be appropriate for an expanded Berkeley Public Library (BPL) in-house Lending Library, and which categories would be best accessed through other community share/rental resources such as REI, AAA, bike and party rental services, and other organizations serving Berkeley.
3. Consider expanding BPL's in-house Lending Library beyond the [current portfolio](#) of carpentry, gardening, kitchen, and other traditional tools to potentially include categories such as toys and games; event furniture and supplies; sports and recreation-related equipment; irons, floor polishing machines, and other household tools; and other durable items typically used on a limited basis by members of the community.
4. Create a plan to establish, maintain, and administer a comprehensive, one-stop reference/resource service for all share/rental/free opportunities available to Berkeley residents, including but not limited to ensuring access to a searchable database of resources and offering assistance and advice to individuals seeking information on share/rental/free opportunities. Consider a partnership with existing platforms and applications such as the Buy Nothing Project to foster connections between neighbors and support the goals of the circular economy.

5. For items to be shared/rented through outside lending or rental services, explore possibilities for SHARE BERKELEY to offer and/or administer City-based or other vouchers/subsidies for low-income residents to access borrowed/rented items from non-Library vendors at reduced or no cost.
6. Consider and propose storage, maintenance, repair, customer service, and other operational and space needs for an expanded in-house Lending Library and to house and administer the Share Hub resource center.
7. Consider start-up and ongoing costs for the expanded in-house Lending Collection and to establish and administer the Share Hub resource center, including but not limited to costs for equipment, materials, software/technology, staffing, and facilities.
8. In the course of researching categories of items to potentially add to the Library's in-house Lending Collections and in considering other elements of the Share Hub concept, conduct robust outreach to individuals and groups of diverse backgrounds, ages, and abilities to ensure services, offerings, and facilities equitably represent and serve all members of the community.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Berkeley is committed to a carbon neutral, zero waste future. To meet its sustainability goals, the City must reduce its impact on the environment by scaling back overconsumption. Given that an average drill is used for just 13 minutes over its lifetime, the amount of plastic and material waste resulting from individual ownership is extremely impactful.¹

BPL's Tool Lending Library (TLL) has long facilitated the reuse of construction and landscaping tools, cutting back on the need for residents to own items they may only use occasionally and producing meaningful environmental benefits.

From 2018 to 2019, BPL conducted a community survey which found that Berkeley residents were interested in having the TLL expand its hours and offerings to include kitchen appliances and utensils. In response, the Library has added a variety of culinary tools to its lending collection, including food dehydrators, Instant Pots, and ice cream makers.²

Providing access to borrow, obtain for free, and/or rent a significantly expanded array of "limited use" personal and household tools, equipment, and materials and other similar resources, either directly through the Berkeley Public Library or through other community organizations,

¹ Ellen MacArthur Foundation, How tool sharing could become a public utility, December 1, 2021, <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-examples/how-tool-sharing-could-become-a-public-utility>.

² Warren, Elliot. Executive Summary of Berkeley Public Library's 2019 Community Survey, May 6, 2019. https://www.berkeleypubliclibrary.org/sites/default/files/files/inline/bpl_2019_communitysurvey_executive_summary.pdf.

businesses, and services, would shape the Library into an even more environmentally impactful and equitable resource for the community.

Expanding the TLL's offerings, and turning the Berkeley Public Library into a one-stop "Share Hub" for the community, will reduce waste and support a necessary transition to a "share" and "circular" economy that de-emphasizes individual consumption and facilitates sharing, reusing, and regeneration. Expanded offerings can also save Berkeley households hundreds and possibly thousands of dollars each year, since nearly one in every four dollars a household spends goes toward resources that could be shared.³

Public Libraries are home to the original "share economy" and have sophisticated systems, developed over thousands of years, to obtain, store, maintain, manage, lend, and retrieve items of importance to the community - books and other media - that are often only used once by each individual. They are the perfect locus to house, administer, and facilitate publicly supported sharing of a much wider range of limited-use tools, equipment, materials and other items and resources.

With their existing infrastructure to support resource sharing and other needs and the public gathering spaces they provide, public libraries are already key resilience centers for the community. As staff gather feedback from community members around the kinds of resources they would like to be able to access they will learn more about additional ways to address and support community needs.

Businesses spawned by the internet's ability to match owners with borrowers have proliferated in the past twenty years, and seek to extract profit from renting goods and/or brokering transactions. Expanding the Berkeley Public Library's mandate as a Share Hub usurps efforts to privatize and monetize sharing and reinforces the critically important role of public entities in reducing waste generated by unnecessary consumption and increasing equitable access to tools, equipment, and materials that enhance community members' lives.

For all of these reasons, this item requests that the Berkeley Public Library study the opportunities, needs, costs, and benefits associated with significant expansion of the Library's sharing mandate, and return to the Board of Library Trustees - and share with the City Council and public - a proposal for the creation and funding of a comprehensive, equitable, and impactful Share Hub for Berkeley.

BACKGROUND

The Berkeley Tool Lending Library, housed in the Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch of the Berkeley Public Library, was established in 1979 with a federal Community Development Block Grant. One of the first such libraries in the nation, the Tool Lending Library has grown to

³ Harris Steve, Mata Erika, Plepys Andrius, Katzeff Cecilia, "Sharing is daring, but is it sustainable? An assessment of sharing cars, electric tools and offices in Sweden," Resources, Conversation, and Recycling Volume 170 (July 2021), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344921001920>.

become a beloved institution, offering Berkeley residents, age 18 and over, a selection of more than 3,500 gardening, home repair, and construction-grade tools for loan, offering frequent workshops on such topics as gardening, home maintenance, and DIY projects.

Similar innovations in library lending have proliferated across the United States.⁴ Boston's Public Library system utilized COVID emergency funds to provide long-term access to Chromebooks and internet routers to empower residents.⁵ Niagara Falls founded its own tool lending library in partnership with Habitat for Humanity.⁶ Leadville, Colorado has framed its tool lending library as a way to keep the institution relevant and responsive to community needs.⁷ Oakland and other libraries lend children's toys.⁸ The Athens-Clarke County library in Georgia lends prom dresses.⁹

Public libraries represent a critical hub for sharing books, knowledge, and other items essential to community members. The "sharing economy" is not a new concept, and pooling resources on behalf of all citizens allows for items' temporary and sustainable use. Libraries have well-developed systems for purchasing, cataloging, repairing and storing the items they lend as well as encouraging their timely return.

Libraries are also in the business of providing reference materials to individuals seeking a wide variety of information. In addition to expanding the Library's own collection, the Share Hub is envisioned to also refer residents to useful information and resources for repairing their own tools and materials, and improving the sustainability of their projects.

The Berkeley Public Library currently takes responsibility for the repair and storage of books, audiovisual materials, and various culinary, gardening, construction, and landscaping tools held at the Tool Lending Library, as well as the new categories of materials such as air quality monitors and bike repair kits, recently added to the collection. Globally, libraries have also taken responsibility for items such as hobby supplies, sewing supplies, telescopes, bikes, scientific equipment, karaoke machines, exercise equipment, and hammocks.¹⁰

⁴ Free, Cathay. "Tools Are Costly and Take up Space. Tool Libraries Are Popping up so People Can Share." The Washington Post, January 5, 2022.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2022/01/05/tool-library-gift-economy/>.

⁵ Boston Public Library. Long-Term Device Lending Program, <https://www.bpl.org/long-term-lending/>.

⁶ Office of Mayor Robert Restaino, Niagara Falls Library to launch community tool lending library, October 21, 2022, <https://www.wnypapers.com/news/article/current/2022/10/21/152738/niagara-falls-library-to-launch-community-tool-lending-library>.

⁷ Tasse, Elaine, "Libraries add museums, tool rentals and job centers to help meet community needs and stay relevant," CPR News, October 19, 2022, <https://www.cpr.org/2022/10/19/libraries-add-museums-tool-rentals-and-job-centers-to-help-meet-community-needs-and-stay-relevant/>

⁸ Oakland Public Library, Toy Lending, <https://oaklandlibrary.org/toy-lending/>.

⁹ Shearer, Andrew, "Why this year's resource for prom fashion might be the Athens-Clarke County Library," Athens Banner-Herald, February 1, 2022, <https://www.onlineathens.com/story/news/2022/02/01/acc-libraries-bling-your-prom-event-could-2022-fashion-source/9287902002/>.

¹⁰ Shaw, Amy and Rosansky, Jaclyn. 50 Things You Can Borrow from Libraries Besides Books. ProQuest, September 9, 2015, <https://about.proquest.com/en/blog/blog-listing/>.

As the “mother of all” sharing resources, libraries have the scale to reshape consumer habits through public initiatives that build on their legacy as free, universal resources for community members. Berkeley’s residents would be well-served by a library that provides a wide variety of items either directly, or by referring patrons to other community resources, at no or low cost, eliminating the need for items to be *owned* but *seldom used* by thousands of individual households - with great environmental and economic consequences.¹¹

Berkeley is a global leader in community responsibility and sustainability. Rather than allowing the “sharing economy” to be dominated by for-profit models, Berkeley should establish an innovative and comprehensive SHARE program that serves residents and provides a replicable model for other communities to follow. An expanded library will save residents money and enable a higher standard of living, reduce waste, and contribute to a necessary shift away from individualized and excessive consumption toward a society uplifted by the sharing of a wider array of communal resources.

Berkeley Public Library respects labor standards, allows community members to gain access to shared resources without proof of address or a government-issued ID, and has eliminated fines to equitably increase access. Berkeley’s library is therefore the perfect medium for expanding the sharing economy in ways that are efficient, equitable, and accessible.

The SHARE Berkeley Program Concept

BPL as a Citywide one-stop Share Hub is envisioned to potentially include all of the following elements:

1. A traditional Lending Library, as currently configured, with an expanded portfolio of items to be lent directly by the BPL.
2. A clearinghouse for information about lending, rental, “free” and similar services in the community, to facilitate community access to borrowing/sharing/rental/free opportunities for a wide variety of goods, locations and services not lent directly by BPL.
3. Administration of a program to help low income-community members access community-based rental and sharing opportunities that charge for services, to ensure people at all income levels can access these opportunities and enjoy the many benefits of “not owning” - but having access to - things that are only periodically needed to support their lives and families.

BPL is requested to explore these and other ideas and propose a comprehensive plan for starting-up, funding, and long term operations for **SHARE BERKELEY** to the Board of Library Trustees. The plan should be as expansive and impactful as possible, offering a vision for a groundbreaking, first-in-kind, comprehensive program combining an in-house collection with referrals, resources and subsidies to equitably access items beyond BPL’s collection. While the full program may need to be phased-in, the goal is to produce a broad, comprehensive, visionary plan as a starting point for conversation, funding, and implementation. Success for this

¹¹ Noria Corporation, “U.S. power/hand tool consumption to hit \$14.3B by 2011,” Reliable Planet, [https://www.reliableplant.com/Read/4854/us-powerh-tool-consumption-to-hit-\\$143b-by-2011](https://www.reliableplant.com/Read/4854/us-powerh-tool-consumption-to-hit-$143b-by-2011).

item is the successful delivery of the visionary plan, for consideration by the Board of Library Trustees.

City of Berkeley staff with relevant expertise should be made available by the City Manager for consultation with BPL in developing the proposal. The City Council would be interested in a presentation of the **SHARE BERKELEY** plan as well, for information purposes and to explore whether the City might partner with BPL in making **SHARE BERKELEY** available to the people of Berkeley.

REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS, PROGRAMS, POLICIES & LAWS

Berkeley Tool Lending Library:

Berkeley Public Library has operated a successful Tool Lending Library since 1979. In the early days, the TLL operated out of a trailer and lent out tools at a low cost – until the 1988 property-based library tax came into effect.

Currently, loan periods for tools are two, three, or seven days depending on demand, and borrowers agree to pay for the loss or damage of items. Renewals on borrowing can be made in person, and borrowers can place reserve requests on items that are currently unavailable.¹² The TLL is open 40 hours each week, with hours Tuesday through Saturday.¹³

BPL's offerings include:

- **Carpentry and Woodworking:** Awl, Butt Hinge Marker, Cabinet Scraper, Chalk Line, Draw Knife, Flat Bar, Hammers, Level, Mallet, Miter Box, Nail Puller, Nail Set, Planes, Plumb Bob, Prybars, Rasp, Router, Saws (Dovetail, Hand, Crosscut, Coping, Horses), Scribing Tools, Shavehook, Speed Square, Spokeshave, Squares, Stud Sensor, Surform Plane, T-Bevel, Tack Claw, Tack Hammer, Tape Measure, Utility Knife, Wood Chisels.
- **Clamps:** Pipe Clamps, Spring Clamps, C-Clamps, Handscrews, Bar Clamps, Handscrews, Bar Clamps, Vise Grip Clamps, Corner Clamps, Clamp Tool Guide.
- **Concrete and Masonry:** Brick Jointing Tools, Bull Float (Magnesium, Wood), Bull Float Handles, Cement Finishing Tools (Darby, Trowels, Edgers, Groovers), Cement Mixer, Cement Mixing Box, Chisels (brick, cold, bull point), Concrete Vibrator, Demolition Hammer, Float (Magnesium, Wood, Rubber), Grinder, Grout Float, House Jacks, Mortar Hoe, Mortar Mixing Box, Rebar Cutter/Bender, "Berkeley" Benders, Rotary Hammer Drills, SDS, Spline Drive, Rotary Hammer Bits.
- **Cooking:** mini muffin and cupcake pan 24 cup, muffin and cupcake pan 12 cup, elephant cake pan, my little pony cake pan, dinosaur cake pan, 3-d pony cake pan

¹² Berkeley Public Library, Borrowing Tools, <https://www.berkeleypubliclibrary.org/locations/tool-lending-library/borrowing-tools>

¹³ Berkeley Public Library, Tool Lending Library - A Brief History, <https://www.berkeleypubliclibrary.org/locations/tool-lending-library/tool-lending-library-brief-history>.

10.5x12x2, Disney Frozen Elsa cake pan, dough press kit, tortilla press, apple peeler and corer, immersion blender, roasting pan with rack 16" x 13", donut baking pan 20 capacity, bundt pan 10 cup gold, bundt pan with handles 12 cup, bundt pan -brilliance 10-15 cup, bundt pan - heritage, springform pan 10 cup, canning kit and supplies, water bath canner, griddle, portable induction cooktop, induction cooktop with frypan and sauce pan, knife sharpener whetstone, pasta machine, electric grain mill, air fryer ninja, belgian waffle maker, mini-prep food processor, food processor 14 cup, ice cream maker 1.6 quart, food dehydrator, sous vide, cookie cutters (Valentines 25 pieces, Christmas 18 pieces, Hanukkah 3 pieces, Thanksgiving 7 pieces, animal cookie cutters 50 pieces, alphabet cookie cutters 101 pieces), electric fryer, Instant pot 9 in 1 8 quart, Cold Brew Coffee Maker, Vitamix blender, Hot air popcorn maker, Soft serve ice cream maker.

- **Electrical:** Bx Cable Cutter, Circuit Tester, Conduit Bender, Extension Cords, Fish Tape, Knock-Out Punch Set, Soldering Irons, Wire Stripper.
- **Floor and Wall:** Caulking Gun, Carpet Cutter, Carpet Edge Trimmer, Carpet Knee Kicker, Carpet, Power Stretcher, Carpet Seam Iron, Carpet Seam Roller, Carpet Stair Tool, Drywall (Mudknives, Corner Knife, Hand Sander, Pole Sander, Mud Pan, Screwgun, T-Square, Floor & Roof Scraper, Heat Gun, Paint Scraper, Plaster Darby, Plaster Hawk, Plasterer's Rod, Tile Cutter (Ceramic & Vinyl), Tile Nipper.
- **Gardening and Digging:** Bow Saw, Broad Fork, Cultivator, Digging Bar, Fence Post Driver, Garden Trowel, Grass Hook, Hedge Shear (Manual), Hedge Trimmer (Electric), Planter's Hoe, Lawn Mower, Leaf Blower, Lopping Shear, Picks (Railroad, Mattock, Hand), Pitchfork, Pole Pruner, Pole Pruner Ext Handle, Pole Saw, Post Hole Digger, Pruning Saw, Pruning Shear, Rake (leaf, bow, grading), Shovel, Soil Tamper, Spade, Garden, Spading Fork, Slate Bar, Street Broom, String Trimmer (WeedEater), Swing Sickle, Telegraph Bar, Trowels, Cultivators.
- **Ladders:** Extension, 16', 24', 28', Ladder Jacks, Orchard Ladder (8'), Step, 2', 4', 6', 8', 10', Roof Jacks.
- **Material Handling:** Piano dolly, Hand Trucks (Refrigerator, Delivery), Contractor's Wheelbarrow.
- **Mechanical Tools:** Bolt Cutter (Mini, 24"), Cable Cutters, Channellocks, Crimpers, Cutters (side & end), Impact Screwdriver, Grinder, Grommet Kit, Files, Sledge Hammer (3,4,8,10 lb), Hacksaw, Hex / Torx Key Set, Nut Drivers, Punches, Pliers, Pop Riveter, Saw (Abrasive Cut-Off), Screwdrivers, Tin Snips, Staple Gun, Swaging Tool, Vise Grips, Wrenches (Allen, Crescent, Metric, Standard).
- **Plumbing and Drain Cleaning:** Basin Wrench, Closet (toilet) Auger, Drain Snakes (Hand, Electric), Faucet Handle Puller, Faucet Seat Wrench, Garbage disp. Wrench, Gas Pressure Tester, Pipe Cutter (Cast Iron, Various), Pipe Reamer, Pipe Vise, Pipe

Wrenches, Pipe Threader (Die, Threader Handle), Tube Bender, Tubing Cutter, Shower Valve Sockets, Submersible Pump Test Plug, Water Meter Key, Water Pressure Tester.

- **Power Tools - Drills and Bits:** Cordless drill, Drill Motor, VSR, 1/2", Drill, Right Angle, 1/2" Drill Bit (Ship Auger, Bellhanger, Self-Feed, Extension), Hole Saw, (Various sizes, Mandrel), Impact driver.
- **Power Tools - Sanders and Grinders:** Angle Grinder, (4-1/2", 7", 9"), Belt Sander (3x21, 4x24), Disc Sander, 7", Random Orbit Sander (5" & 6"), Vibrating, 1/4, 1/2 Sheet.
- **Power Tools - Saws:** Circular (Skilsaw), Power Miter (Chop), Reciprocating (Sawzall), Saber (Jigsaw), Table (8").
- **Recent Additions:** Air Quality Monitors, Bike Repair Kit, iFixit Smartphone and Tablet Repair Kit.

Tool Lending Libraries Nationwide:

Berkeley was one of the first, but there are now similar Lending Libraries throughout the United States. Some lending libraries have innovated by including a wider array of items than Berkeley's Lending Library. The following is a sampling of programs/items other Lending Libraries include. These and other examples are suggestive of the kinds of programs/items Berkeley may wish to explore adding to its collection. BPL is encouraged to be creative and consider going beyond these existing models as well!

- The Chicago Public Library lends backpacking backpacks, sleeping bags and pads, air mattresses, tents, and even fishing poles.
- The Napa County Public Library lends popular board games, jigsaw puzzles, blood pressure monitors, E-readers, and musical instruments.
- [The Sacramento Public Library](#) lends Prom Dresses and attire.
- [The San Francisco Public Library](#) lends children's toys.
- Maine's [Millinocket Memorial Library](#) rents mountain bikes, canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, cross-country skis, snowshoes, and fat-tire bikes
- The Altadena Public Library lends out telescopes, virtual reality headsets, sewing machines, and tarot card decks.
- The Bolivar County Library in Mississippi offers Santa suits.
- The Sherwood Public Library in Oregon has DSLR cameras, LEGO sets, hula hoops, therapy lights, and knitting needles.
- New York Public Library's Riverside Branch lends neck and bow ties, briefcases, and handbags.
- The Washington County Library offers metal detectors, backyard movie kits, playstation consoles, and turntables.

Many other examples can be identified and explored during the research phase of the referred study.

Overview of Rental/Share Economy Services available to Berkeley Residents:

The following is a sampling of rental/share services currently available in the community. These are the kinds of services the Share Hub would be able to refer community members to, and for which the Library could administer subsidies for low income community members.

- REI – Rents backcountry snow gear, bear canisters, camping and hiking gear, snow shoes, climbing gear, cross country ski gear, cycling gear, downhill ski gear, and paddling gear.¹⁴
- Sports Basement – Rents skis, snowboards, snow packages, snow apparel, pickleball gear, tennis gear, bikes, backpacking, car camping and picnic equipment, stand up paddle boards, kayaks, surf and body boards.¹⁵
- Avis, Hertz, Enterprise, Zipcar, [Gig Share](#), and Turo – rent vehicles and moving vans.
- California Ski Company - rents skis and boots.
- Paper Plus Party (may be closing soon) – rents tables, chairs, snow cone machines, nacho cheese dispensers, popcorn poppers, and cotton candy carts.
- Swimply – Lists swimming pools for hourly rentals.
- Freecycle.org, Craig’s List and Facebook Marketplace – Free and low-cost items listed by owners for sale or reuse.

Many more rental and sharing resources exist for the Share Hub to identify and refer to patrons.

Another exciting opportunity that has come to light in consulting with outside organizations would be to increase local access to the Bay Area Seed Interchange Library (BASIL), which ensures the preservation of genetic diversity in our planet’s seed stock and would provide local gardeners and farmers access to a diverse collection of seeds, with the agreement they attempt to grow them and return some of the next generation at the end of the season.

Other partnership opportunities will no doubt be discovered through the outreach and exploration of creating the **SHARE BERKELEY** plan.

Voucher programs for rentals:

Currently, the [Berkeley Rides for Seniors & the Disabled Program](#) provides up to \$720 of free scrip (temporary paper money) to pay for demand-response taxi transportation for older and disabled Berkeley residents. Similar voucher or subsidy programs for low income community members could support rental of items from outside vendors such as those listed above, significantly increasing access to items and resources that might otherwise be out of reach. For items that the BPL’s expanded TLL does not choose to furnish from its own collection, the referred study should consider parameters and potential funding sources beyond the Library Tax Fund for a program to subsidize rentals by lower income community members.

¹⁴ REI, Rental Pricing, <https://www.rei.com/stores/rentals/pricing>.

¹⁵ Sports Basement, Rentals, <https://shop.sportsbasement.com/collections/rentals>.

ACTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Berkeley Public Library could continue to operate the Tool Lending Library without exploring the expansion of its collection and role in Berkeley's share economy. Berkeley residents would still benefit from this, but the Library and City would miss out on an opportunity to explore options to support and lead on achievement of the city's GHG emission and zero waste goals, and the people of Berkeley would not have the benefit of a possible one-stop resource for sharing, renting, and free-cycling.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Berkeley is an innovative City with a history of leadership on programs and policies that benefit the local community and serve as models for other jurisdictions to adopt. Expanding Berkeley's Tool Lending Library and providing a hub for information, resources, and subsidies to rent and share items offered by other organizations/businesses serves a number of important goals for our community.

Creating a comprehensive Share Hub at the Berkeley Public Library supports the achievement of Berkeley's Zero Waste goals by reducing the need for individual households to purchase rarely-used items – many of which are manufactured in distant locations, with raw and finished materials transported across the globe. In addition to the environmental impacts of creating and transporting these items, they are often transported and sold in impactful packaging.

A good [overview of the impacts of our society's addiction to "stuff"](#) is provided by The Story of Stuff, a Berkeley-based not for profit focused on reducing consumption and increasing sharing. The crux of the matter is that we produce and consume too much stuff – a lot of it toxic and most of it slow to decompose – and we don't share it very well. However, with a broadly expanded mandate and resources, the Berkeley Public Library can help advance the share economy and be a part of the movement to shift attitudes on consumption.

Additionally, while certain outlets such as REI and Sports Basement, both local businesses, rent out camping and recreational equipment, cost remains a barrier for low-income families. This is where the inclusion of sporting goods and other hobby equipment in the TLL could help bridge the gap. The same outcome could be achieved if the BPL decides providing vouchers is a better path forward.

CONSULTATION/OUTREACH OVERVIEW & RESULTS

Councilmember Hahn has had conversations with library staff on the subject of expanding the Tool Lending Library and was met with a positive response. The office has consulted with outside experts including the Ecology Center in Berkeley. Because this is a referral to do in depth consultation and research, broader consultation with the community is envisioned as an important outcome of the referral.

IMPLEMENTATION, ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Berkeley Public Library staff has expressed interest in taking on this project and carrying it out from the initial planning stages through its eventual implementation. Library staff would be

responsible for exploring options for expansion including smaller-scale pilot approaches, consulting members of the community about their needs, and evaluating the cost of procuring additional equipment. BPL will work at their own pace but are requested to report to the Board of Library Trustees within two years, to share conclusions, and are invited to share their proposals with the City Council as well.

FISCAL IMPACTS

The creation of **SHARE BERKELEY** is expected to require BPL to hire new staff and obtain new equipment, software, and facilities. BPL may also seek to involve the Berkeley Public Library Foundation and Friends of the Berkeley Public Library to provide an avenue for philanthropic contributions to **SHARE BERKELEY** - at its inception, and/or on an ongoing basis. On its website, the Chicago Public Library asks for donations to purchase specific items such as generators, folding chairs, utility carts, and canopies, among other things. Berkeley's generous community may take a strong interest in further supporting the establishment and operations of **SHARE BERKELEY**, given the strong correlation with the mission of the Berkeley Public Library, the environmental and social benefits to the community, and the fact that BPL already is formally designated as one of Berkeley's "Resilience Centers."

Further, Alameda County recently launched two new lending libraries, one with funding from the California State Library. Similarly, the Los Angeles County TLL is supported by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services. BPL should look at the potential to apply for Library-oriented and environmental/zero-waste-oriented grants, and all other potential funding opportunities.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Lending libraries encourage community members to borrow rather than buy, reducing the wasteful purchase of items rarely used and their environmental impact. Any efforts to reduce the production and purchase of plastic, metal - and any - materials will have a positive overall impact on our planet. According to the United Nations, resource extraction has more than tripled since 1970 and accounts for half of the world's carbon emissions and 80% of biodiversity loss.¹⁶ Furthermore, the expansion of TLL signals the City's commitment to the share economy and will help facilitate a cultural shift in views on consumption.

Additionally, expanding the availability of garden equipment can promote community greening and locally-procured urban agriculture. Many items that might otherwise end up in a landfill can be diverted to the Lending Library for future use.¹⁷ Insofar as this diversion happens and there is strong participation in borrowing, this initiative will help achieve the city's zero-waste and climate action goals.

¹⁶ Watts, Jonathan, "Resource extraction responsible for half the world's carbon emissions," The Guardian, March 12, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/mar/12/resource-extraction-carbon-emissions-biodiversity-loss>.

¹⁷ Tabor, Neil, "Evaluating the Success of Tool-Lending Libraries and their Contributions to Community Sustainability," University of Nebraska-Lincoln Environmental Studies Program, August 2013, p. 20. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1125&context=envstudtheses>.

OUTCOMES & EVALUATION

As stated previously, the expected outcome of this recommendation is that BPL will create an innovative plan for **SHARE BERKELEY**. The plan should be as expansive and impactful as possible, offering a vision for a groundbreaking, first-in-kind, comprehensive program combining an in-house collection with referrals, resources and subsidies to equitably access items beyond BPL's collection. While the full program may need to be phased-in, the goal is to produce a broad, comprehensive, visionary plan as a starting point for conversation, funding, and implementation. Success for this item is the successful delivery of the visionary plan, for consideration by the Board of Library Trustees.

The intent of this item is to fully explore options for an expanded TLL and Share Hub at the Berkeley Public Library. One outcome of the study might be that the TLL/BPL is not the best space for the full spectrum of desired services, and other options are recommended. These might include partnerships with outside organizations such as Berkeley's Ecology Center, or centering some or all expanded services elsewhere within the City organization, such as in the office of Energy and Sustainable Development. It is hoped that the process of studying and exploring the benefits and opportunities for a comprehensive, public Share Hub for Berkeley will lead to recommendations for viable paths forward within the TLL/BPL, and/or suggestions for other means to achieve these important goals for the community.

The **SHARE BERKELEY** plan to be developed by BPL should include metrics to measure the success of the new initiative. For example, success could be evaluated on the basis of how many new items are lent relative to the expense of the expanded program. Qualitative impact measures can be explored that evaluate how the availability of expanded resources and the overall program positively address community needs and interests. Estimates of reductions in GHG emissions and plastic consumption, for example, and consumption of other toxic and impactful materials can also be estimated and folded into the City's metrics tracking progress on Climate and Zero Waste goals. High community participation in the expanded collections and resources will help guide the collection of new items. And the library could make use of volunteer focus groups, intercept interviews, or surveys to assess what items community members would be most interested in borrowing. Community feedback shared in the planning process will also inform expansion of the current collection. All of this is to be determined by BPL staff in developing and presenting the proposed program.

CONTACT

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Special thanks to Aleks Wolan, Legislative Director District 5