



## LIBRARY COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

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September 7, 2023  
Item 4

### **SUBJECT: REVIEW AND RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE INCLUSIVENESS IN MATERIALS STATEMENT**

#### **SUMMARY**

Pleasanton Public Library's mission is "Discover, Connect, and Share" and is guided by the Library and Recreation Department's values of integrity, inclusiveness, innovation, customer service, and collaboration. To ensure alignment with the Library's mission and values, and in consideration of recent book banning attempts in public libraries, Library staff and the Library Commission's Policy Sub-Committee are proposing an Inclusiveness in Materials Statement that would outline the Library's position of open and free access to library resources for all users.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Review and recommend approval of the Inclusiveness in Materials Statement.

#### **FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

There is no direct financial impact.

## **BACKGROUND**

Books have been banned throughout the history of the United States, without sustained success or benefit to its citizenry. In 1982, the American Library Association launched Banned Books Week in response to a surge in the number of challenges to books in schools, bookstores, and libraries at that time. The event highlighted the value of free and open access to information and brought together community members, librarians, booksellers, publishers, journalists, and teachers, in shared support of the freedom to seek and express ideas. Banned Books Week continues nationally each year in October to highlight these important freedoms.

In 2022, over 40 years since Banned Books Week was launched, the American Library Association reported that book challenges in the United States had reached the highest number of attempted book bans since ALA began compiling data about censorship in libraries more than 20 years ago.

In June 2023, in response to recent book ban attempts in California, the Library Commission's Policy Sub-Committee identified the need for an Inclusiveness in Materials Statement that would clearly outline the Library's position on open and free access to resources and highlight its existing Collection Development Policy. The Policy Sub-Committee worked with staff to develop a new Inclusiveness in Materials Statement that could accomplish these goals. The statement was then reviewed by the City Attorney's Office and the Department's Diversity Equity and Inclusion Work Group.

## **DISCUSSION**

The proposed Inclusiveness in Materials Statement (Attachment 1) incorporates the Library's mission and values, and integrates the Collection Development Policy and the Request for Reconsideration Form with a detailed review process. It outlines the Library's position on its freedom to acquire lawful materials, its unwavering commitment to opposing attempts to censor library resources and its dedication to respecting individual choice.

If approved by the commission, the statement will be presented at the City Council's November 7 meeting for approval. Upon approval by the Council, this statement will be professionally translated into multiple languages and made available for community members in the Library and on its website.

Submitted by:



Yu Tao

Attachment: Inclusiveness in Materials Statement