

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 13, 2016

TO: Mayor Mike Amyx; Commissioners Stuart Boley, Matthew Herbert, Lisa Larsen, and Leslie Soden

FROM: Brad Allen, Executive Director, Lawrence Public Library

RE: 2017 Budget Request for Lawrence Public Library

This July marks the second anniversary of Lawrence Public Library's grand reopening. Since that time, we have welcomed well over one million visitors. The relaunch of our community's library has been an indisputable success and a symbol of pride for Lawrence. Lawrence Public Library is one of seven libraries to win the 2016 American Institute of Architects/American Library Association Library Building Award and has been nationally recognized as a *Library Journal* Landmark Library. We have built a building that will serve our community well for years to come. It is paramount that our cherished public library secure the necessary public funding to provide the quality of service and collections to match our beautiful building. **Lawrence Public Library respectfully requests a budget amount for 2017 from the City of Lawrence of \$4,050,000. This is an increase of \$300,000 (or 8%) compared to 2016.**

The 2017 budget addresses two serious issues: **pay equity** and **adequate spending on library collections**.

- **Pay equity.** Despite broad public support, Lawrence Public Library has suffered from significant pay equity issues for decades. Library employees are not paid at the same rate as their counterparts at peer libraries, nor are they paid as well as City of Lawrence employees in comparable pay grades. **The vast majority of the \$300,000 budget increase request goes right to the heart of addressing this pay equity issue.** The library intends to implement a three-year plan that will get our employees to wages on par with peer libraries and city employees.
- **Library collections.** Spending on library collections has been stagnant for nearly a decade. In that time, the demand for digital content has risen dramatically, and the decrease in demand for actual books, movies, and music is not adequate to make up the difference. Lawrence Public Library does not currently have adequate funds to meet the demand for e-books and digital music and movies. These new formats are considerably more expensive than their physical counterparts. **To guarantee access to these resources for all Lawrence citizens, it is necessary to increase our collections budget by \$50,000, from \$550,000 to \$600,000.**

Thank you for considering our request. Public libraries are vital community anchors, now more so than ever. Lawrence Public Library is an essential city service. We respectfully ask for adequate funding to provide the library service our community wants and deserves.