

Natchitoches Parish Library FACT SHEET

Why Natchitoches Parish NEEDS Libraries –

The Library is a **cornerstone** in the educational process, providing equitable access to information, engaging opportunities and experiences, and relevant connections and community space for all residents of Natchitoches Parish. **STRONG LIBRARIES BUILD STRONG COMMUNITIES** and educational growth is essential for a vital economy!

CURRENT SITUATION: The Library is entirely supported by an 8 mill, dedicated property tax which voters passed in 1997 then renewed in 2007 & 2017. In 2021, actual ad valorem received by the Library was \$2.9M; the Library's operating budget for that year was \$2M. The Library has a Strategic Plan, available at www.natlib.org, which acts as a guide for the current operating budget and future capital outlay projects.

COUNCIL PROPOSAL: The Natchitoches Parish Council is asking voters to rededicate half of the library's millage – approximately \$1.5M – and use it to “fix” Parish roads exclusively outside the city limits of Natchitoches. Currently, the Council has not presented any plans for these funds. The cost to overlay an existing mile of paved road is approximately \$300K. This rededication of funds would allow the Parish to overlay 5 of the 328 miles of paved roads within the Parish while crippling library services and programs permanently.

RESULTS: If this proposition passes, the Library will be forced to make difficult decisions regarding closing branches and reducing hours, staff, services, and programs offered to ALL residents of Natchitoches Parish.

IF this PROPOSITION PASSES, the LIBRARY will be FORCED to CLOSE the NORTHEAST BRANCH & REDUCE HOURS, STAFF, SERVICES, & PROGRAMS at the MAIN BRANCH.

A “YES” VOTE MEANS:

- No future expansion (branch) in the Western or Southern parts of the Parish.
- CLOSING the Northeast Branch in Campti.
- Decreasing hours of operation at the Main Branch.
- Staff reduction.
- Discontinuing hoopla services.
- Discontinuing wifi hotspot circulation.
- Discontinuing online database access to LinkedIn Learning, Consumer Reports, Fiero Code, Ref. USA, Novelist, and Northstar Digital Literacy.
- Significantly decreasing materials purchasing.
- Reducing/eliminating Bookmobile services. No purchase of Schoolmobile to better serve students.
- Reducing/eliminating programming for all ages including Summer Reading performers.

A “NO” VOTE MEANS:

- Expanding service in rural areas of the community by building branches in the Western & Southern parts of the Parish.
- Enhancing service to school children by purchasing a new Schoolmobile.
- Maintaining a professional level of service at all library locations, 6 days out of the week.
- Increased investment in purchasing physical and digital materials and content.
- Expanding electronic resources and new technology.
- Increasing outreach services and home delivery.
- Continued year-round programming for all ages.

LIBRARY RESERVE FUND, not surplus

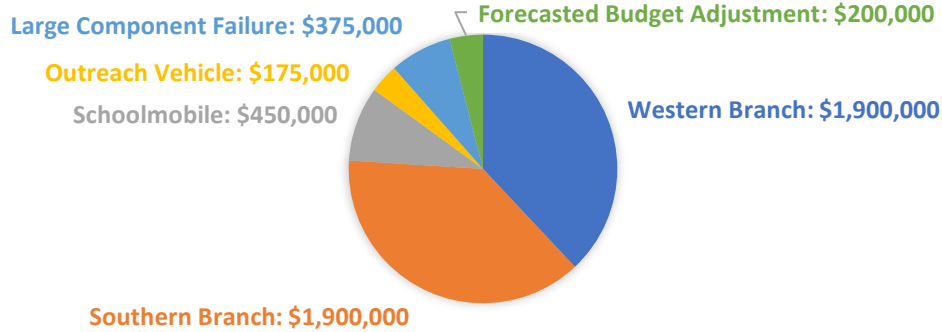
The Library has a forward funded budget, meaning the current year's projects are paid with last year's money, thereby avoiding debt and reducing risk, while also not placing any extra burden on taxpayers. This allows us to responsibly fund the goals and initiatives outlined in the library's Strategic Plan, available at www.natlib.org. In the past two years, this budgeting has allowed the Library to build a meeting room at the Northeast Branch and replace the HVAC system and roof at the Main Branch, all done without incurring debt or overspending.

The **Library ended 2022 with approximately \$5M in our reserve fund**, putting us in a position to move forward with three large capital outlay projects – purchasing a new Bookmobile to better service the schools and children in our Parish and building branches in both the Western and Southern parts of the Parish.

VOTE APRIL 29th

Early Voting April 15th – 22nd

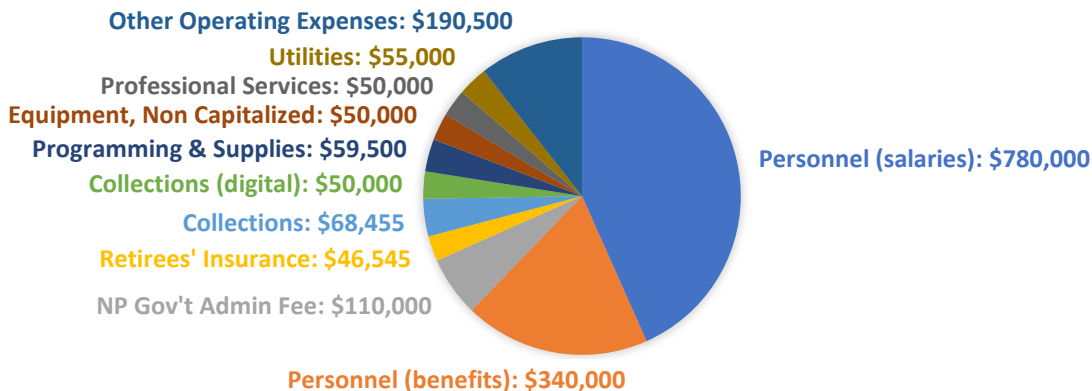
Future Capital Outlay *reserve fund, approximately \$5M*



Future Operating Budget *approximately \$2.4M*

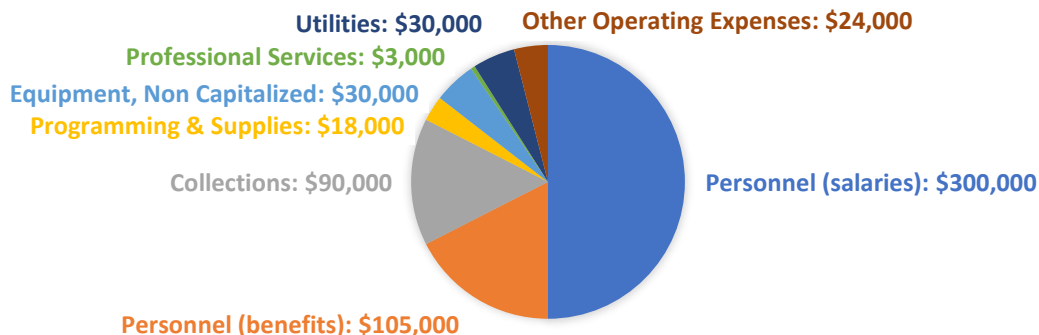
Ad valorem property taxes are based on a projected amount. A historical look at the library's ad valorem received since 2004 shows that what is projected, is never the actual received amount. On average, the library has received 11% less in ad valorem than what was projected. When the Parish Council suggests cutting the library's millage in half, history proves that the actual amount will be in fact even more!

MAIN BRANCH APPROXIMATELY \$1.8M



The Library does not take money from other Parish funds in any way; in fact, the Library offsets shared Parish Government Administrative costs – over \$100,000.

NORTHEAST, WEST, & SOUTH BRANCHES APPROXIMATELY \$600K



VOTE APRIL 29th

Early Voting April 15th – 22nd