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## **CITY OF OREGON CITY LIBRARY BOARD AGENDA**

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Conference Room (2nd Floor), Oregon City Public Library, 606 John Adams St, Oregon City  
Monday, June 1, 2026 at 2:30 PM

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*Ways to participate in this public meeting:*

- *Attend in person, location listed above. Please see the public comment guidelines below.*
  - *Register to provide electronic testimony (email [dbutcher@orcity.org](mailto:dbutcher@orcity.org) by 3:00 PM on the day of the meeting to register)*
  - *Email [dbutcher@orcity.org](mailto:dbutcher@orcity.org) (deadline to submit written testimony via email is 3:00 PM on the day of the meeting)*
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### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

### **2. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- a. Refine Overdue Fine Elimination Proposal

### **3. ADJOURNMENT**

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## **PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES**

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When a public comment period is included on a meeting agenda, members of the public are allowed up to three minutes to address the Library Board on any topic. Members of the Library Board do not generally engage in dialogue with those making comments but may refer any questions or issues raised to the Library Director. Any written comments or materials must be provided at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to Denise Butcher, Library Operations Manager ([dbutcher@orcity.org](mailto:dbutcher@orcity.org), 503-496-1601).

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## **ADA NOTICE**

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The location is ADA accessible. Individuals requiring hearing devices or other assistance must make their request known 48 hours preceding the meeting by contacting Denise Butcher, Library Operations Manager ([dbutcher@orcity.org](mailto:dbutcher@orcity.org), 503-496-1601).

**Agenda Posted at City Hall, Pioneer Community Center, Library, City Website.**

**Video Streaming & Broadcasts:** The meeting is streamed live on the [Oregon City's website](#) and available on demand following the meeting. The meeting can be viewed on Willamette Falls Television channel 28 for Oregon City area residents as a rebroadcast. Please contact WFMC at 503-650-0275 for a programming schedule.



## CITY OF OREGON CITY

625 Center Street  
Oregon City, OR 97045  
503-657-0891

### Staff Report

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**To:** Library Board **Agenda Date:** June 1, 2026  
**From:** Greg Williams, Library Director

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**SUBJECT:**

Refine Overdue Fine Elimination Proposal

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

n/a - Discussion only

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The Library Board's Overdue Fine Committee will review and refine the upcoming presentation to the City Commission.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Library Board's Overdue Fine Committee will review and refine their upcoming proposal and presentation to the City Commission (anticipated to be presented at the June 9, 2026 City Commission Work Session).

**NEXT STEPS:**

n/a - Discussion only

**OPTIONS:**

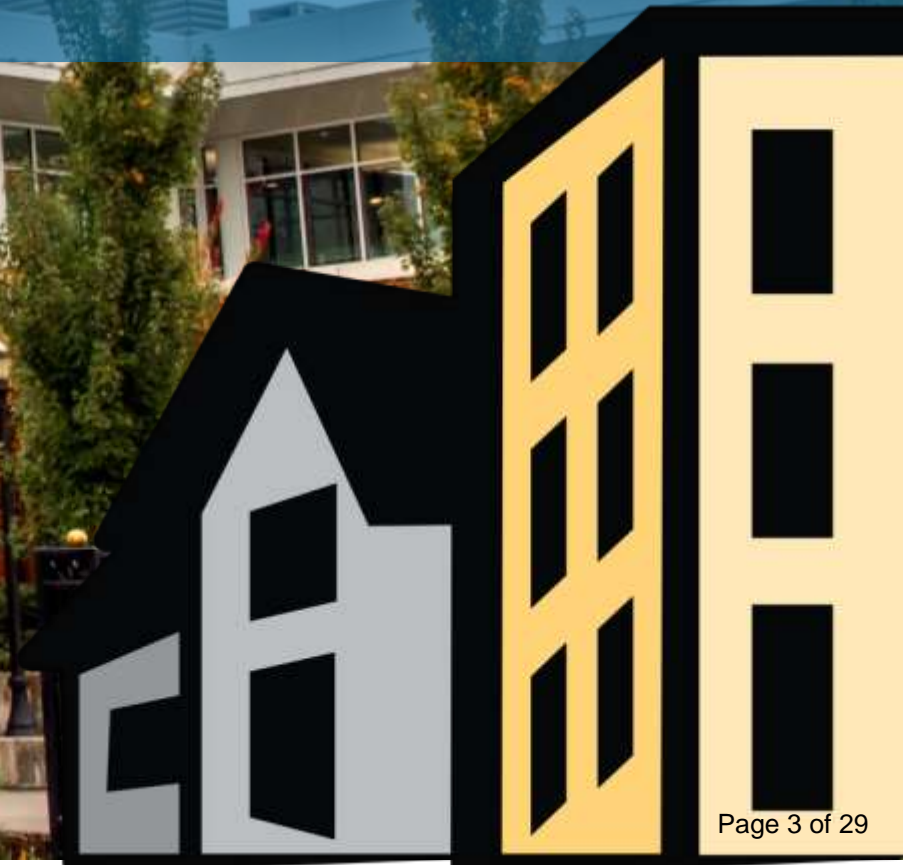
n/a - Discussion only

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# LIBRARY OVERDUE FINES

Recommendation by the Oregon City  
Library Board to the City Commission  
June 9, 2026



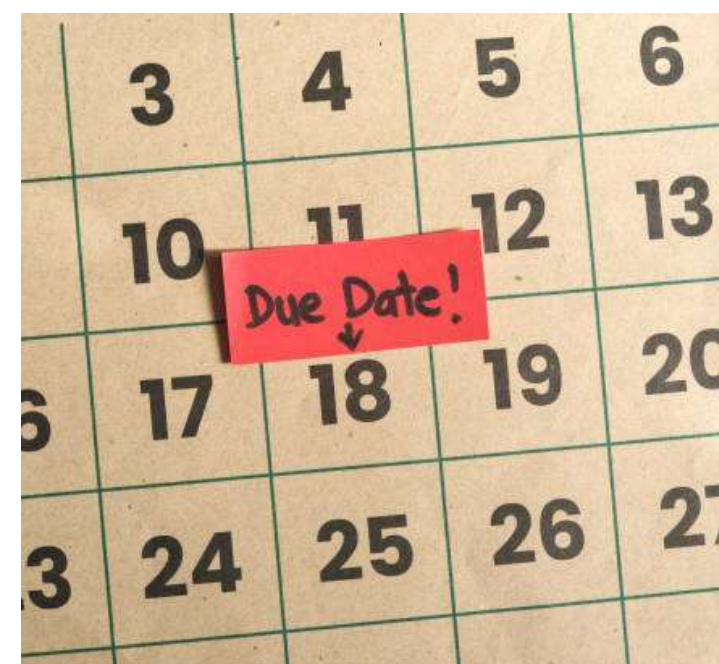
# **Presentation Overview**

- 1) Definition of Overdue Fines
- 2) Recommendation to Eliminate Overdue Fines at OCPL
- 3) City Commission Discussion and Direction



# Definitions

- **Overdue fines** only refer to fines assessed when materials are not renewed or returned by the due date (typically \$0.10/day).



# Definitions

- Overdue fines do not include charges for materials that are:

*Damaged*



*Lost*



*Stolen \**



*\*The Library works with OCPD to investigate and press charges in cases of theft.*

***No changes to any of these charges are being proposed.***



# Library Board Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION	FINANCIAL IMPACT (amount/frequency)
#1) Eliminate overdue fines on Library materials effective August 1, 2026.	Approx. <b>\$6,500 / year</b> (declining in future)
#2) Waive outstanding overdue fine balances on OC patron accounts as of August 1, 2026.	Approx. <b>\$24,000 / one-time</b>



# Library Board Recommendations

**DRAFT**

*Why is the Library Board recommending eliminating overdue fines?*

1. Directly supports City Commission access and equity goals.
2. Improves consistency with existing City policy.
3. Better alignment with statewide public library practices.
4. Minimal financial impact.
5. Better overall Library experience for our community.



# Library Board Recommendations

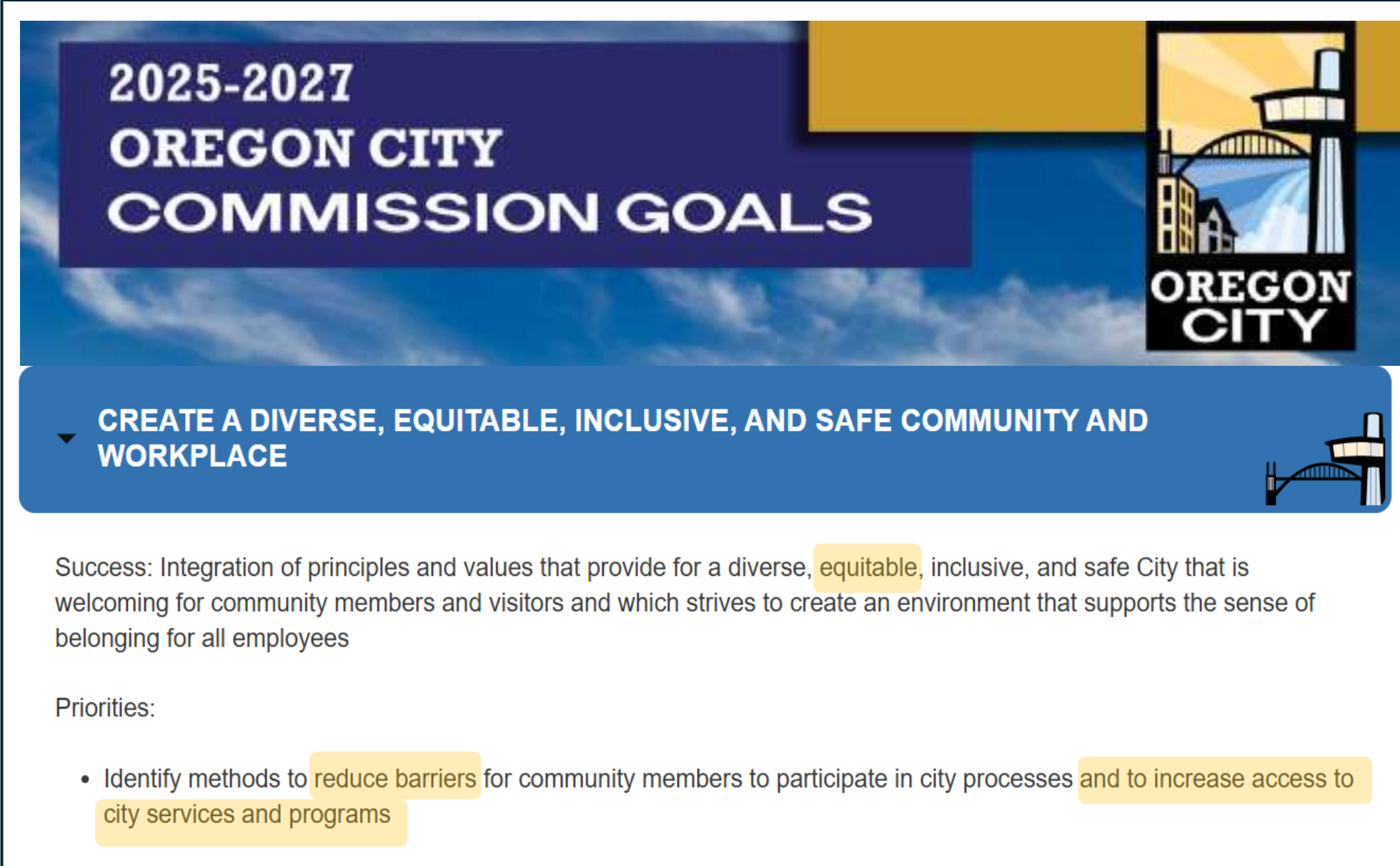
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## **1. Directly supports Commission access and equity goals.**


2. Improves consistency with existing City policy.
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# #1) Supports Commission Access and Equity Goals *DRAFT*



2025-2027  
OREGON CITY  
COMMISSION GOALS



▼ CREATE A DIVERSE, EQUITABLE, INCLUSIVE, AND SAFE COMMUNITY AND WORKPLACE



Success: Integration of principles and values that provide for a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and safe City that is welcoming for community members and visitors and which strives to create an environment that supports the sense of belonging for all employees

Priorities:

- Identify methods to reduce barriers for community members to participate in city processes and to increase access to city services and programs



# #1) Supports Commission Access and Equity Goals **DRAFT**



## **Resolution on Monetary Library Fines as a Form of Social Inequity**

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association  
Monday, January 28, 2019, in Seattle, WA

Whereas monetary fines present an economic barrier to access of library materials and services;

Whereas there is mounting evidence that indicates eliminating fines increases library card adoption and library usage;

Whereas monetary fines create a barrier in public relations, and absorb valuable staff time applying, collecting, and managing dues;

Whereas the first policy objective listed in ALA Policy B.8.10 (Library Services to the Poor) as approved by ALA Council on January 28, 2019, states that the American Library Association shall implement these objectives by "Promoting the removal of barriers to library and information services, particularly fees, and overdue charges";

Whereas ALA Policy B.4.2 (Free Access to Information) "asserts that the charging of fees and levies for information services, including those services utilizing the latest information technology, is discriminatory in publicly supported institutions providing library and information services";

Whereas in Economic Barriers to Information Access, An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, ALA states "All library policies and procedures, particularly those involving fines, fees, or other user charges, should be scrutinized for potential barriers to access;

Whereas libraries will need to take determined and pragmatic action to dismantle practices of collecting monetary fines

Whereas libraries of all types are responsive to bodies, be they school districts, boards of trustees, college and university administration, or government entities and therefore need to be able to make the case to those bodies about eliminating fines; and

Whereas monetary fines ultimately do not serve the core mission of the modern library; now, therefore, be it

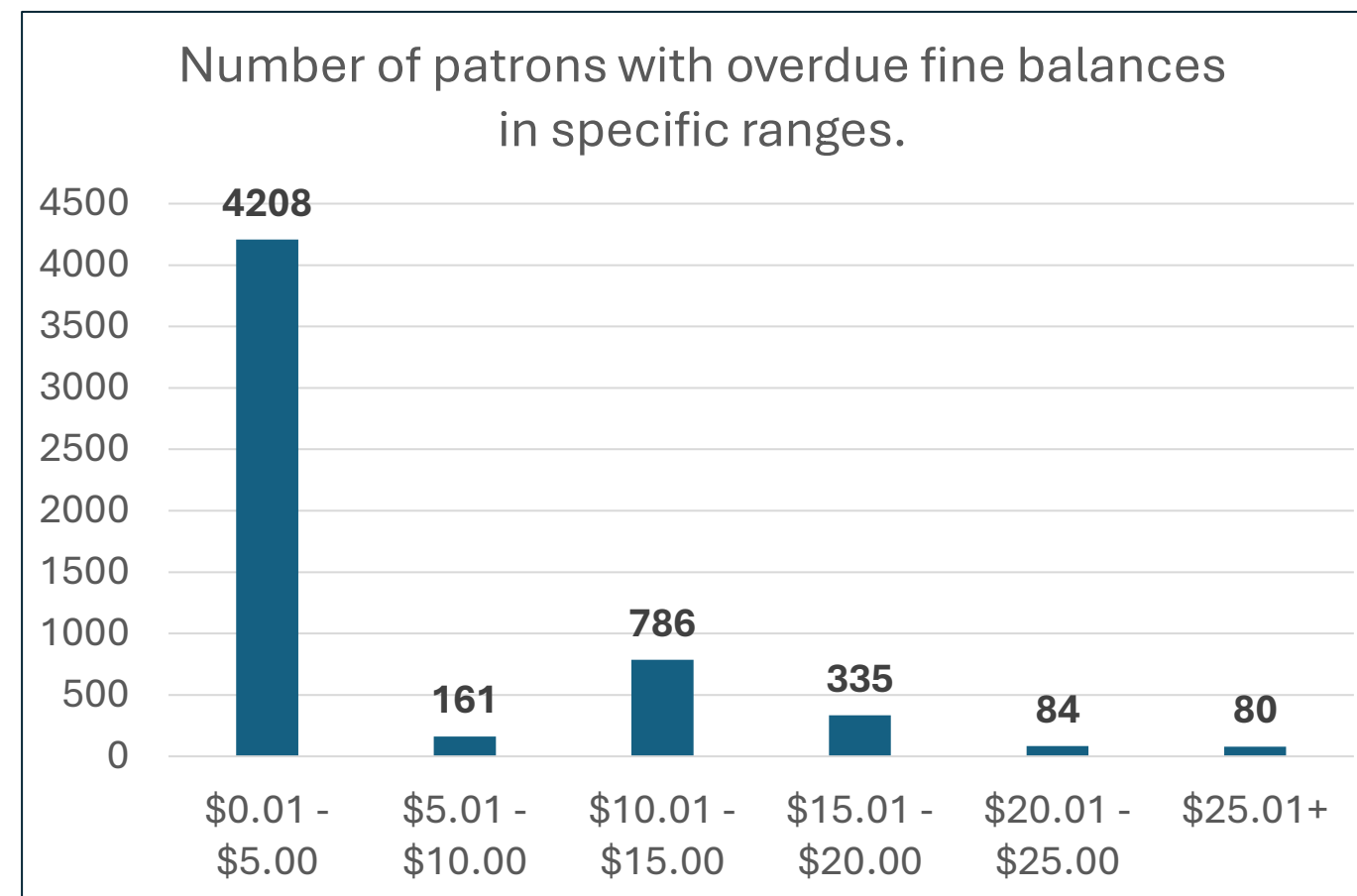
*Resolved*, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members

1. adds a statement to the Policy Manual that establishes that "The American Library Association asserts that imposition of monetary library fines creates a barrier to the provision of library and information services.";
2. urges libraries to scrutinize their practices of imposing fines on library patrons and actively move towards eliminating them; and
3. urges governing bodies of libraries to strengthen funding support for libraries so they are not dependent on monetary fines as a necessary source of revenue.
4. establish a working group to develop information resources, including strategies and tips, for libraries interested in abolishing fines, with a report due to Council at the 2019 Annual Conference



# #1) Supports Commission Access and Equity Goals *DRAFT*

- Overdue fines create a disincentive and financial barrier to access for a significant number of OC cardholders.
- Currently, **21%** of OC cardholders (5,654 out of 26,407) have overdue fines on their account.



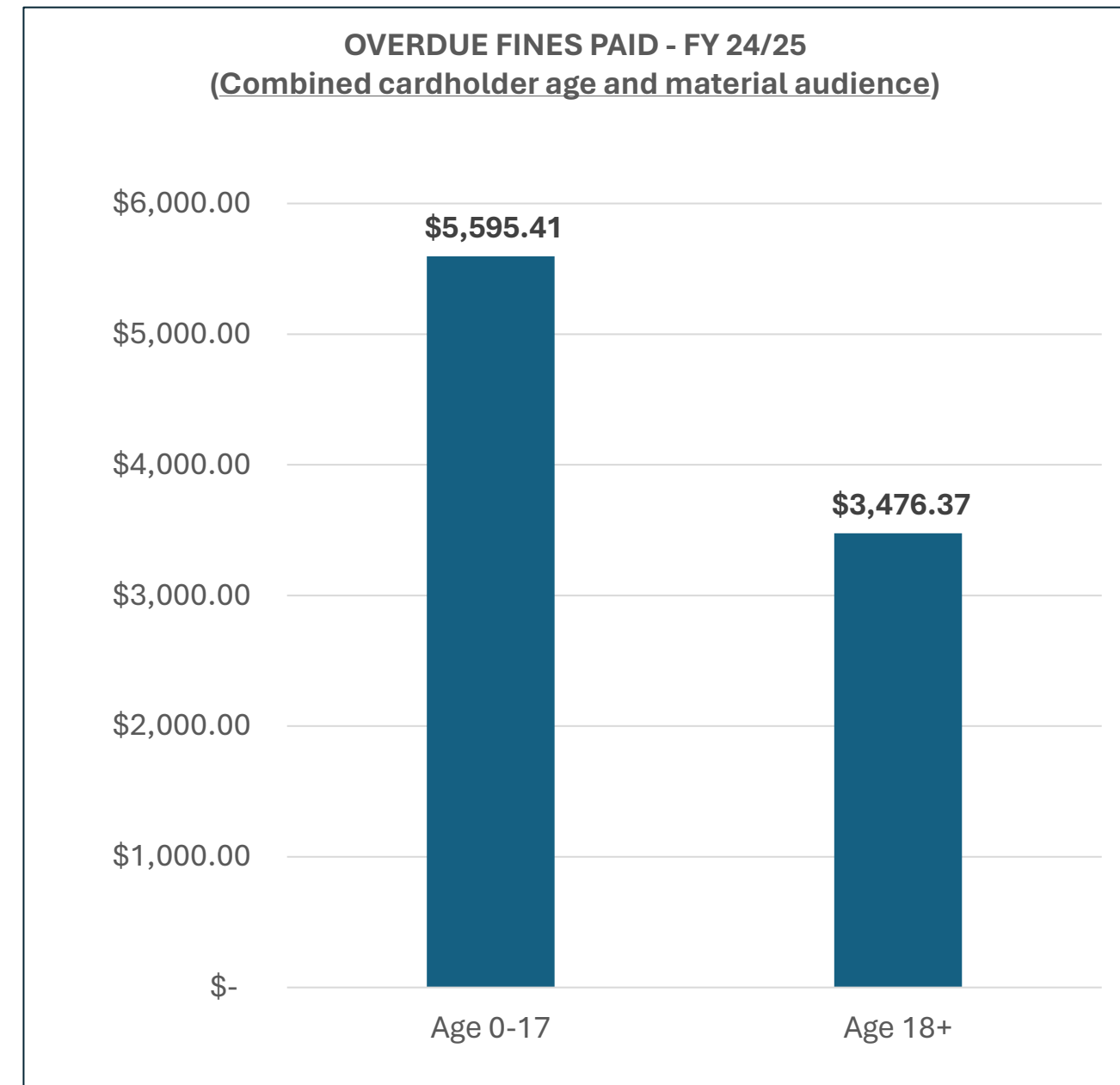
# #1) Supports Commission Access and Equity Goals *DRAFT*

- One of the Library's main areas of focus (per its Strategic Plan) is **Create and Support Young Readers**.
- For OCPL, overdue fines also disproportionately impact the young patrons we prioritize supporting.



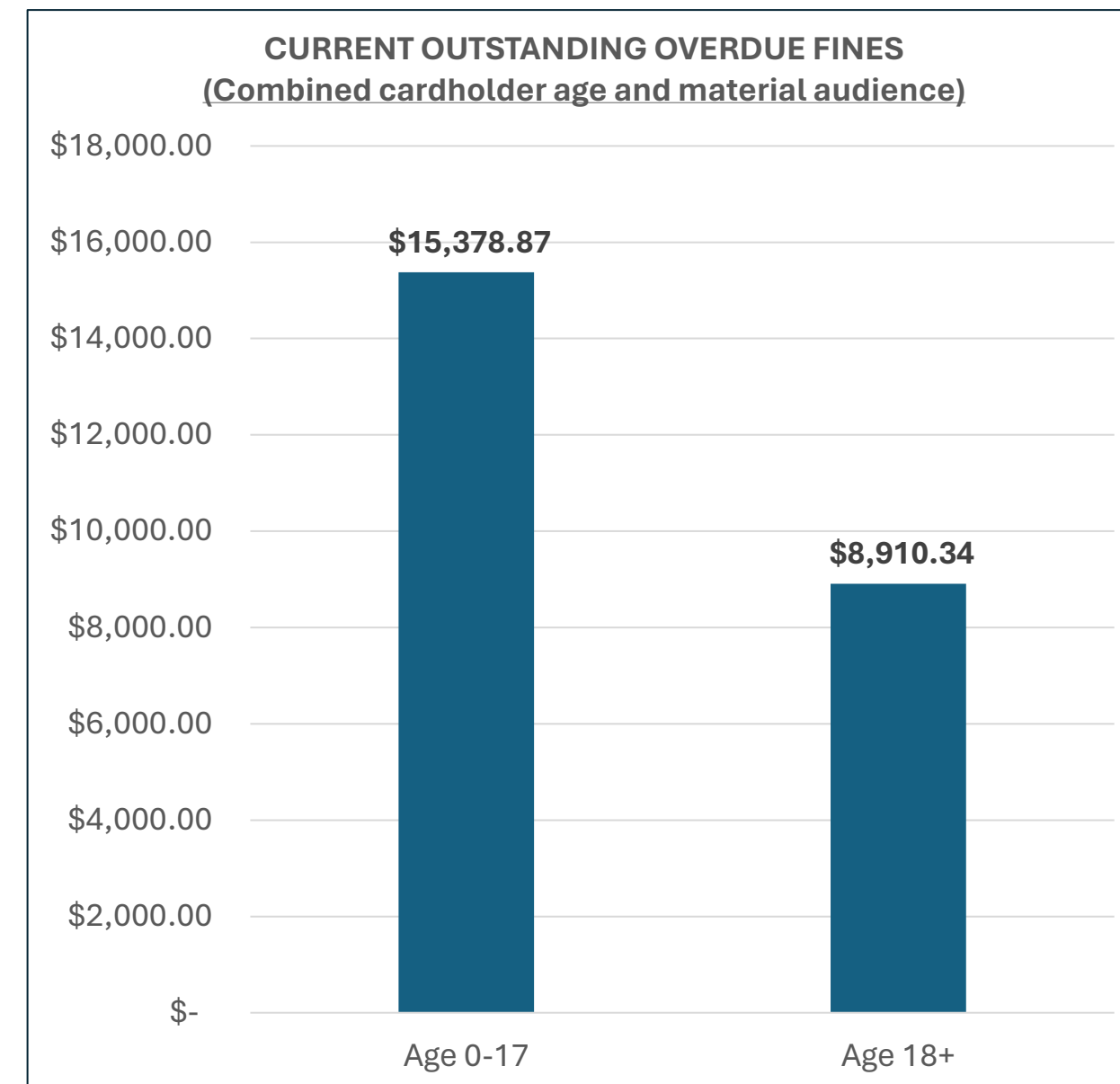
# #1) Supports Commission Access and Equity Goals *DRAFT*

- Of the \$9,075 in overdue fines collected in FY 24/25, **62%** was either on a youth library card or associated with youth materials (likely checked out by parents).



# #1) Supports Commission Access and Equity Goals *DRAFT*

- Similarly, of the approximately \$24,289 in outstanding overdue fine balances, **63%** is either on a youth library card or associated with youth materials (likely checked out by parents).



# Library Board Recommendations

***DRAFT***

1. Directly supports City Commission access and equity goals.
- 2. Improves consistency with existing City policy.**
3. Better alignment with statewide public library practices.
4. Minimal financial impact.
5. Better overall Library experience for our community.



## #2) Improves consistency with existing City policy

- Per City Policy, departmental fees are intended to reimburse the City for costs incurred in providing specific services.
- Overdue fines are not related to any Library expenditure or cost (Historically, their purpose has been to incentivize specific behavior).

Management Policy 3-29  
July 1, 2025

**REIMBURSABLE COSTS FOR MISCELLANEOUS CITY SERVICES**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide for a biennial examination of miscellaneous City services offered, requested or required by specific individuals, organizations, businesses, etc., and to establish a uniform schedule of fees for the reimbursement of the costs of those services.

**APPLICABILITY**

This policy is applicable to all persons requesting or requiring these miscellaneous City services and to all City departments providing the requested or required services.

**IN GENERAL**

This policy requires each department to set fees for certain miscellaneous City services not specifically regulated by Oregon State Statutes, City Charter, City Code, City Ordinance or City Resolution, at a rate that covers the actual cost to the City, and to review those costs at least on a biennial basis.



**DRAFT**

## #2) Improves consistency with existing City policy

- Existing fee schedule utilizes “up to” language, which would permit reducing overdue fines on all items to \$0.00 with no updates to existing policy/schedule.

### LIBRARY

LATE/DAMAGED/LOST ITEM COSTS:	
General materials (daily late fee)	Up to \$0.10 / day
General materials (maximum late fee)	Up to \$5.00
General materials (damaged/lost charge)	Up to retail cost of item



# Library Board Recommendations

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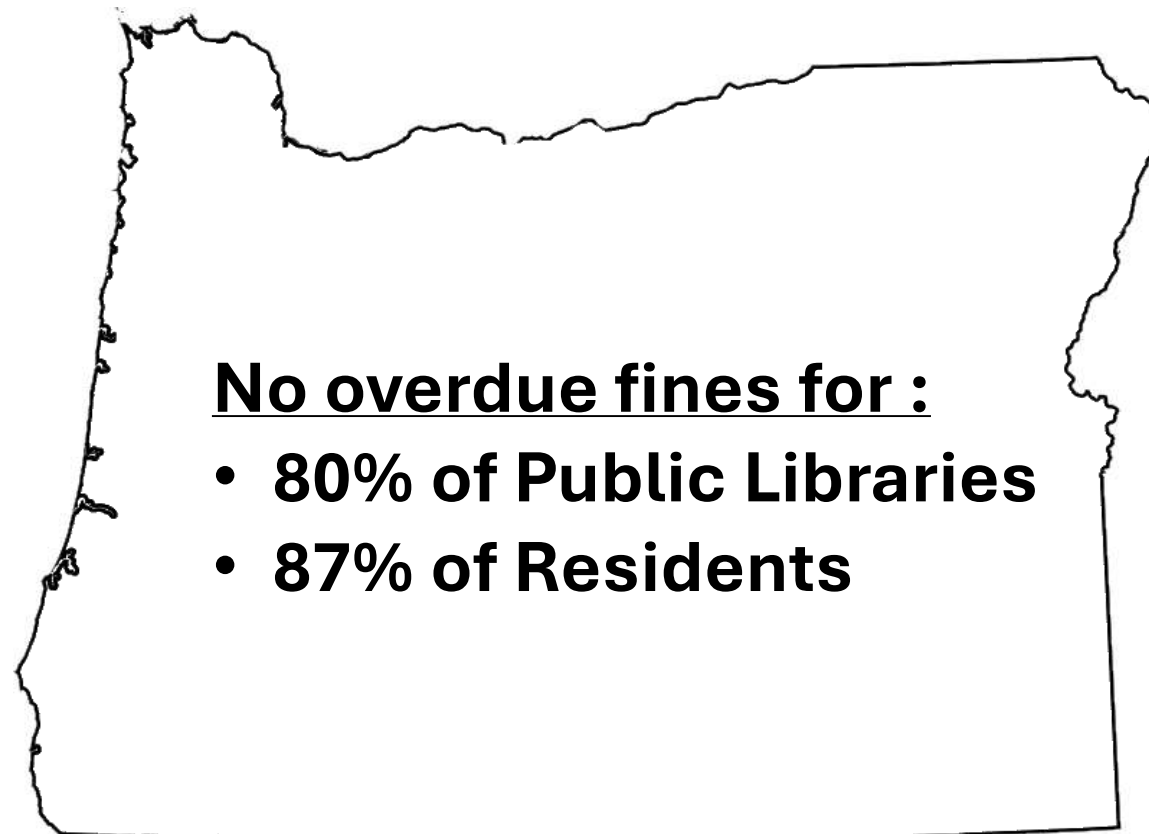
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**DRAFT**

# #3) Better alignment with statewide public library practices

- Most public libraries in Oregon no longer charge overdue fines



**No overdue fines for :**

- **80% of Public Libraries**
- **87% of Residents**

*OR Libraries still charging overdue fines*

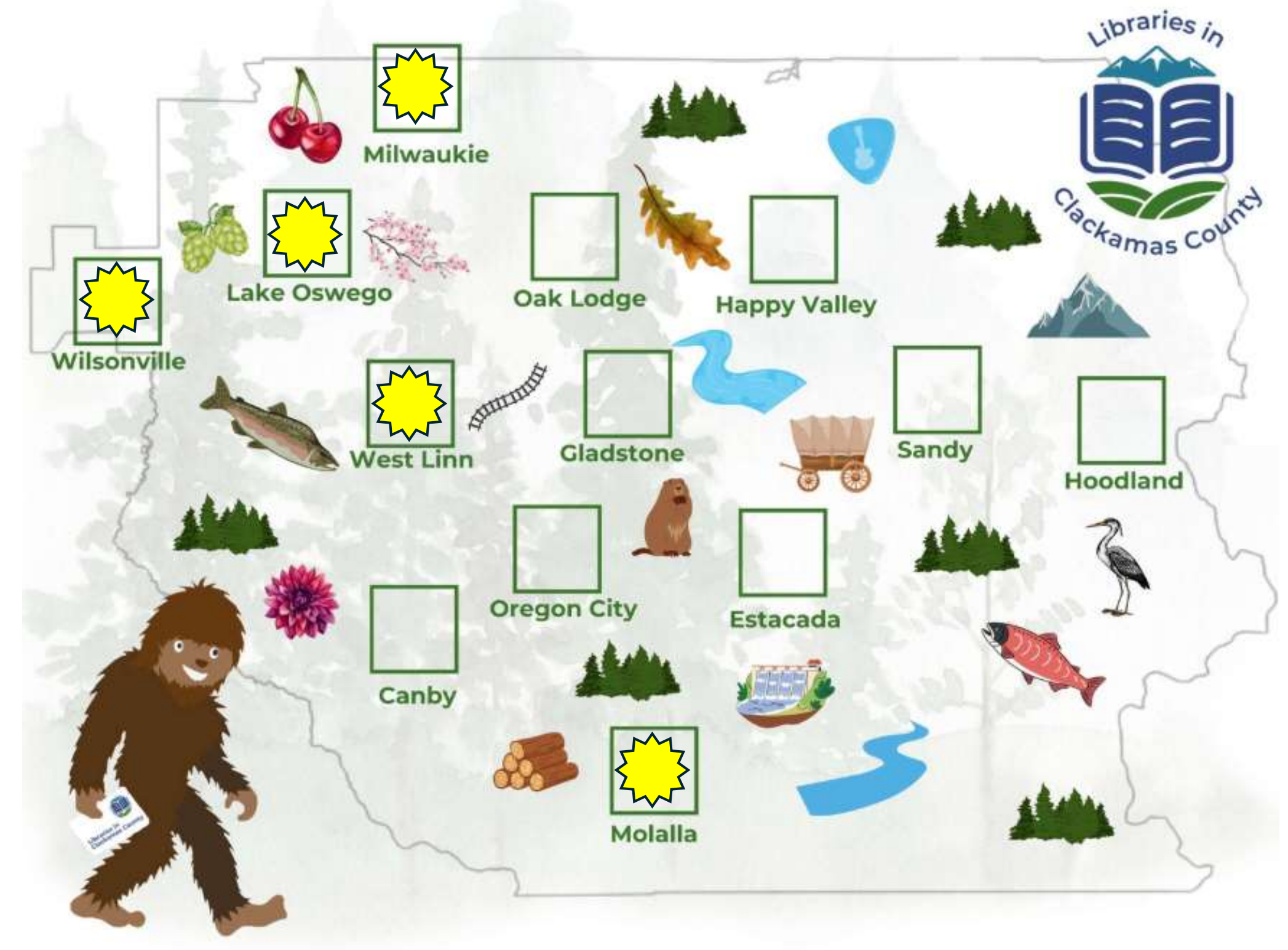
Library Name	Population	City	District or cooperative membership
Happy Valley Public Library	62,066	Happy Valley	LINCC
Oregon City Public Library	61,065	Oregon City	LINCC
Sandy Public Library	33,928	Sandy	LINCC
Clackamas County - Oak Lodge Public Library	31,871	Oak Grove	LINCC
Hermiston Public Library	28,129	Hermiston	UCSLD
Ontario Library District	26,259	Ontario	
Canby Public Library	25,462	Canby	LINCC
Pendleton Public Library	22,164	Pendleton	UCSLD
Gladstone Public Library	21,543	Gladstone	LINCC
Silver Falls Library District	20,628	Silverton	CCRLS
The Dalles-Wasco County Library	20,599	The Dalles	WCLSD
Lebanon Public Library	19,936	Lebanon	
Estacada Public Library	19,880	Estacada	LINCC
Baker County Library District	16,746	Baker City	
Cottage Grove Public Library	10,879	Cottage Grove	
Astoria Public Library	10,131	Astoria	
C. Giles Hunt Memorial Library	8,679	Sutherlin	
Lake County Library District	8,221	Lakeview	
Junction City Public Library	7,410	Junction City	
Seaside Public Library	7,268	Seaside	
Lower Umpqua Library District	6,371	Reedsport	
Winston Public Library	5,666	Winston	
Union Carnegie Public Library	4,316	Union	
Amity Public Library	4,077	Amity	CCRLS
Nyssa Public Library	3,290	Nyssa	
Oakridge Public Library	3,167	Oakridge	
Stanfield Public Library	2,839	Stanfield	UCSLD
Vernonia Public Library	2,433	Vernonia	
Emma Humphrey Library	1,870	Vale	
Brownsville Community Library	1,830	Brownsville	
Yoncalla Public Library	1,086	Yoncalla	
North Powder City Library	812	North Powder	
Helix Public Library	418	Helix	UCSLD



**DRAFT**

# #3) Better alignment with statewide public library practices

- **5 out of 13 LINCC** libraries have recently eliminated overdue fines.



# Library Board Recommendations

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# #4) Minimal Financial Impact

FISCAL YEAR	OVERDUE FINES COLLECTED
FY 22-23	\$15,104
FY 23-24	\$12,326
FY 24-25	\$9,075
<i>FY 25-26</i>	<i>\$6,500 (est)</i>

- Overdue fine revenue will likely continue to decline in the future due to various factors (more usage of eBooks, planned LINCC-wide automatic renewals, better patron due date communications, empowering staff to reduce barriers, etc...).
- Since BY 23/25, overdue fine revenue has not been included in Library operating budget (overdue fine elimination will have no negative service impacts).
  - For the proposed one-time \$24,000 waiver, it is unlikely that the full amount would be collected before historical records are purged (after 3 years of no activity, per LINCC policy and County retention schedule)



# Library Board Recommendations

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## **#6) Better overall Library experience for our community.**

“Some of our patrons will think that one simple transgression such as returning materials a few days late leaves you embarrassed and financially culpable. Who would want to return to such a place?”  
(Kohn, 2015)



- The Library’s reputation as a welcoming, accessible community space is harmed by the association with late fees.
- Staff time and energy expended in dealing with overdue fines and negative interactions is time and energy that could be better spent on supporting patrons and addressing their needs.
- The community goodwill lost through negative interactions over overdue fines is far more valuable than the small amount of revenue received.



***DRAFT***

# **Other Common Concerns**



# Concern #1

***“Overdue fines teach responsibility.”***

- Overdue fines do not distinguish between people who are responsible or not. More often, they distinguish between:
  - People who have or do not have the technological ability and access to self-renew materials.
  - People who do or do not have reliable or convenient transportation to the Library.
  - People who can and cannot afford to use money to overcome a common oversight.



## **Concern #2**

### ***“Overdue fines incentivize people to return materials on time”***

- Multiple studies have shown there is no strong correlation between overdue fines and timely returns.
- In fact, overdue fines can have the opposite effect. A person faced with unaffordable late fees may simply choose to stay away from the library and never return late materials.

**“It became clear to us that there were families that couldn’t afford to pay the fines and therefore couldn’t return the materials, so then we just lost them as patrons altogether..we wanted our materials back, and more importantly, we wanted our patrons back.”  
(Bowman, 2019)**



# Questions for Commission

1. Is the City Commission supportive of the Library Board's recommendation to eliminate overdue fines starting August 1, 2026?
2. Is the City Commission supportive of the Library Board's recommendation to waive approximately \$24,000 in existing overdue fines on OC patron accounts as of August 1, 2026?
3. Presuming there is City Commission support, does the Commission wish to have a formal vote at the June 17, 2026 regular meeting, or is the Commission comfortable with Library Staff proceeding based on existing Commission goals/priorities and City policy?

