

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Paul Burns (502) 574-1683 [Office]

Middletown Library to reopen Saturday

Uncertainty about future remains

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (November 1, 2019) – The Middletown branch of the Louisville Free Public Library will reopen at 10 a.m. this Saturday, November 2, in its former location in the East Government Center.

The Middletown branch closed June 20 as part of several Louisville Metro Government budget reductions, resulting from a sharp increase in the city's state pension bill and lack of new revenue. The Louisville Metro Council later passed a budget amendment that allocated \$412,500 to temporarily reopen a more limited branch.

Mayor Greg Fischer has made clear that in the current budget situation—with Metro having to make some \$25 million in cuts, requiring sacrifices across the city—reopening the Middletown branch, which is less than five miles from the new, larger Northeast Regional Library, is not fiscally responsible and deepens inequities across our community. Yet, as it is part of the budget that Council approved, he's said, it is the executive branch's responsibility to implement that budget.

Library staff has been working since summer to get the site ready to reopen.

Hiring staff has been particularly challenging; to date, only four of seven positions needed to staff the branch have been filled. Work to fill the additional positions will continue as the branch reopens, and staff from other locations will help out in the interim.

Library Director Lee Burchfield noted that "working for the Louisville Free Public Library is extremely rewarding" and encouraged anyone who is interested to apply for these and other current library vacancies. Applications can be submitted online at www.LouisvilleKY.gov.

Because of limited staffing and funding, the Middletown branch will operate on a reduced schedule—open 40 hours over five days per week. Services will include book return, holding items for pickup, and a small browsing collection of popular materials for children and adults, as well as computers for public use.

It remains unclear how long the branch will operate. Metro Government's lease on the East Government Center facility expires in the summer of 2020. The Metro Council ordinance that reopens the library says its operation is "contingent upon securing a signed partnership with the City of Middletown or another entity providing space at no cost or de minimis cost for the Library by December 31, 2019." No suitable site at de minimis cost has yet been identified.

Middletown Library Hours of Operation

Tuesday and Wednesday: 12–8 p.m.

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

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