

Publication of the agenda and the approximate times are a guide to, and not a limitation on, the activities of Trustees. Order of agenda items may be adjusted.

**Bellis Fair Library Branch, 1 Bellis Fair Parkway
Suite 616, Bellingham, Washington – 3:30 p.m.**

AGENDA **TIME (approx.)**

We acknowledge that we gather on territory that has been the traditional and ancestral homeland to the Lhaq'temish (the Lummi People), the Nooksack People, and other Coast Salish tribes of this region Since Time Immemorial.

We honor our shared responsibility to this land and these waters, we commit to learning from Indigenous wisdom, and we strive to repair and deepen our relationships as neighbors and friends.

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Call to order and introductions | 1 min |
| 2. Approve/modify agenda | 1 min |
| 3. Public comment
This time is set aside for members of the public to make comments.
Remarks will be limited to three minutes. | 3 min |
| 4. Consent agenda (see packet materials)
All matters listed on the consent agenda are considered routine and may be approved in a single motion. A Trustee may ask that an item be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications and FYI• Minutes: April 15, 2025: Regular Board Meeting• Library performance & activity measures: April 2025• Financial reports
Claims: April 2025
YTD report: April 2025
1st Quarter Donation report | 2 min |
| 5. Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board Chair• Library Board members• City Council liaison• Friends of Bellingham Public Library• Library Director (see packet materials) | 8 min |

Time check: 3:45

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 6. WCLS Levy update (see packet materials) | 15 min |
| • Christine Perkins, WCLS Executive Director | |
| 7. Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update | 15 min |
| • Rebecca Judd, Director | |
| 8. Budget Planning update | 10 min |
| • Rebecca Judd, Director | |
| | Time check: 4:25 |
| 9. Central Library Renovation update | 15 min |
| • Rebecca Judd, Director | |
| 10. Strategic Planning (see packet materials) | 10 min |
| • City of Bellingham Comprehensive Plan text; Rebecca Judd, Director | |
| | Time check: 4:50 |
| 11. New business | 3 min |
| 12. Agenda items for next meeting | 2 min |
| | Time check: 4:55 |
| 13. Adjourn | |

Accessibility:

The Bellingham Public Library Board Room is ADA accessible. Elevator access to the upper floor is available at the Central Avenue entrance. If you require a sign interpreter or other accommodation, please allow the library 48 hours' notice. For additional accommodation, contact the Administrative Assistant at 360-778-7220 in advance of the meeting.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting: Tuesday, June 17, 2025 – 3:30 p.m.
Location: Lecture Room, Central Library, 210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, Washington**



In the face of federal funding cuts, libraries are making hard choices about whether or how they can continue a wide range of community services. Among programs on pause or in jeopardy, a popular role-playing game program at Upper Skagit Library teaches tweens leadership and mentoring as well as math, storytelling and other skills. (Courtesy Upper Skagit Library)

April 29, 2025

Libraries rethink funding strategies after federal cuts

SYDNEE CHAPMAN

CULTURE

community services executive order federal budget cuts library funding

SHARE:

Local libraries seek solutions to keep vital, popular programs running

An executive order from the Trump administration will have negative trickle-down impacts on libraries in Whatcom, Skagit and San Juan counties, say library employees.



The order calls for cuts to the Institute of Museum and Library Services, or IMLS, as part of the administration’s **efforts to cut costs and reduce the federal workforce**.

IMLS is the only federal agency dedicated to funding library services. The cuts include the loss of \$3.9 million for the Washington State Library, which supports a variety of programs, grants and resources for local libraries.

“This is devastating news,” Bellingham Public Library Director Rebecca Judd wrote in an email.



Well-used computers for kids sit are tucked in next to bookshelves at the San Juan Island Library. (Courtesy San Juan Island Library)

The funding could have a wide range of impacts, particularly for prison, hospital and tribal libraries as well as the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library. Local library employees said that other potential impacts include:

- Reduced access to online resources like eBooks and the popular Libby app

- The loss of research databases and training for library staff on how to use those databases
- Slower internet speeds
- The end of innovative programs like virtual reality headsets, tabletop gaming grants and assistive devices for those with disabilities.



Those resources are not only popular among patrons but essential to communities, library employees said.

“The eBook usage has taken off like crazy, especially since the pandemic,” Lopez Island Library Director Darren Hoerner said. “There are also people that need it, especially people that are dealing with some sort of either vision or hearing impairments. ... For the population on Lopez — which is an older population, more retiree age — these are critical services for continued access to knowledge.”

San Juan Library Director Laurie Orton is also concerned how IMLS changes will impact the state’s tech service, which allow libraries to sign up for IT management and discounts on equipment like computers and hotspot devices. In rural areas where internet access isn’t uniform across the population, that equipment can be crucial for residents who use the library’s internet for things like telehealth appointments.

Library employees said concerned patrons can contact their representatives and share how libraries impact them personally, volunteer at libraries, attend library board meetings or donate needed items.

“Patrons should also know that they certainly aren’t powerless in these kinds of situations,” Upper Skagit Library librarian Chazlyn Lovely said over email. “Libraries are here to support the community, but right now libraries may need support and advocacy in return to continue to do so.”

Disappearing grants

Although the full scope of the IMLS changes is yet to be seen, some libraries are already seeing direct impacts to grants the state provided through IMLS funding.

Orcas Island Library Director Ingrid Mattson, for example, said she received notice shortly after the executive order not to spend any more of a \$15,000 grant because there is no one to process the reimbursement requests.

“The cutoff of funds that were already secure was a surprise,” said Mattson. “We’ve had to talk to staff to say, ‘Hey, we either have to find another way to pay you to do the hours that were promised to you’ — a staff person living in a place where housing is scarce and you’re doing what you can to keep it together — ‘or just don’t do this project any longer.’”

Hoerner, likewise, said the Lopez Island Library is now on the hook for \$6,000 that was supposed to be reimbursed with grant money.

“For a small rural library like ours, that’s a lot of money,” he said.



Washington State Library/IMLS-funded Tabletop Role-Playing Games For All grant awardees attended workshops with nonprofit organization Game to Grow, a 501(c)(3) dedicated to the use of games for therapeutic, educational and community growth. (Courtesy Upper Skagit Library)

Lovely said staff are halting grant-funded improvements to its role-playing games program, which would have included Dungeons & Dragons games in Spanish and American Sign Language as well as cosplay and LARPing programs where teens could have learned how to make costumes and props.

More than just funding

Some librarians are worried about the more intangible impacts of the IMLS changes. That includes a shift in the organization’s goals under Keith E. Sonderling, who was

sworn in as acting director last month.



“I am committed to steering this organization in lockstep with this administration to enhance efficiency and foster innovation,” **he said**. “We will revitalize IMLS and restore focus on patriotism, ensuring we preserve our country’s core values, promote American exceptionalism and cultivate love of country in future generations.”

Mattson called that focus “one of the more concerning components” of the changes. The phrase “in lockstep with this administration” also raised alarm bells for Orton.

“‘In lockstep’ just brings negative images to my mind from a historical perspective,” she said. “It didn’t encourage me in thinking that they were upholding freedoms and rights, so that really disturbed me.”

Beyond providing books, **libraries offer a large range of services**.

They provide meeting spaces and operate teen and children’s programs. They rent out things like Discover Passes, instruments, local history curriculum kits and even American Girl dolls. They host craft fairs or technology classes for seniors. They proctor tests for students and give out opioid overdose kits. And they serve as a place to print important documents or charge a phone.

“With the increase in book challenges over the past couple of years and legislation attempts in other states aimed at fining or jailing librarians I wasn’t surprised, but I was still frustrated,” Lovely said. “Libraries do what we can to advocate for the people we serve and ourselves, but there are still a lot of people out there that either don’t know about what we do or they don’t think it’s necessary.”

Looking for other solutions

The IMLS cuts are particularly relevant in Washington, where the state library — and by extension, local libraries — are feeling the pains of the state’s budget multibillion dollar deficit.

Lovely said without that support, Upper Skagit Library will have to rethink its own budget and offerings.



The library becomes a safe place and second home to teens participating in games programs. The programs build leadership and mentoring skills as well as skills in math, reading, story telling, working in and managing small groups, and improvisational thinking. (Courtesy Upper Skagit Library)

“My library has an operating budget that just can’t afford on its own to provide certain things — they’re just out of our price range,” she said.

One solution, she added, is partnering with a handful of other local libraries to share costs and staff responsibilities for certain services that they can’t afford to provide individually. The library is also considering pursuing a levy increase later this year.

Funding is also an issue for the Whatcom County Library System, which gets the majority of its funding from local property taxes. It is asking residents to support **a library levy increase** on August’s ballot. The levy applies to properties outside of Bellingham city limits.

“As federal and state support for public libraries dwindles, local support in the form of property tax becomes essential,” said Mary Vermillion, a spokesperson for Whatcom County Library System.

The tax increase would allow the library to maintain its current staffing, hours of operation and services and address deferred maintenance and opportunities for

building projects. The library currently operates 10 branches and served nearly 62,000 library cardholders last year.



Libraries in San Juan County also receive a majority of their funding from property tax levies; they said they've seen a swell of support from their communities.

“Walking down the street here [on Lopez Island], I've had many people stop me. They know what's going on and they express their support for the library because they know it's a community resource,” Hoerner said. “So I feel like we've got the community with us in this process. It's just unfortunate that we even have to go through it.”

— *By Sydnee Chapman*



Also read in *Salish Current*:

- “**Whatcom READS builds a community of readers,**” Jan. 31, 2025
- “**The vision of Mount Vernon’s Library Commons becomes reality,**” Sept. 24, 2024
- “**Library ... plus: today’s version provides much more than books,**” Feb. 27, 2024
- “**Commentary: Vote Yes for Our Library,**” Sept. 22, 2022

• • •

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*We welcome **letters to the editor** responding to or amplifying subjects addressed in the Salish Current.*

*Got an idea for a **Community Voices** essay? Email your subject proposal to Executive Editor*

Mike Sato (msato@rockisland.com) and he will respond with guidelines.



WASHINGTON

Secretary of State

Menu

Anticipated Layoffs to Hit Washington State Library After Budget Request Rejected

May 12, 2025

OLYMPIA – The Office of the Secretary of State delivered 47 at-risk of layoff letters over the past two weeks to Washington State Library (WSL) employees. This is the first step toward anticipated layoffs in Washington state’s process and a direct result of diminished state and federal funding.

Staff in state-funded positions received a layoff date of June 30, 2025, while federally funded positions saw that date extended to Sept. 30, 2025, due to the federal government’s decision to rescind a termination of a critical grant.

“It is heartbreaking and distressing to witness the near elimination of our state’s Central Library, which has existed since territorial times to enrich our culture and serve as a research hub for our state’s residents,” said Secretary of State Steve Hobbs. “It hosts a one-of-a-kind literary collection dedicated to our region and history, notable digital initiatives and tools accessed by professional historians, journalists, and an interested public, a comprehensive collection of newspapers in the state of Washington, a repository of state and federal publications, and research assistance to residents by professional librarians. This will also have a significant impact on operations at the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library, which relies on both state and federal funding.”

On the last day of the legislative session, the State Legislature passed the 2025–2027 Operating Budget without including any of the \$6.7 million requested to support library operations. This decision comes amid a severe budget deficit for WSL, driven by a sharp

decline in real estate transactions and loan refinancing, both of which contribute recording fees that help fund WSL.

House Bill 1207, currently awaiting the Governor's action, will provide some budgetary relief. Still, the funding gap is already having a measurable effect on library services statewide.

"Libraries are cornerstones of civic life and education," said Washington State Librarian Sara Jones. "Without stable funding, we risk denying communities access to the information, literacy tools, and resources they depend on."

The Central Library employs 15 staff and several project positions funded by state revenues from document recording fees primarily from real estate transactions. Also funded by those state dollars are 12 positions at the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library (WTBBL), providing accessibility to library services for those who cannot read standard print. WTBBL positions and services are funded by a combination of state and federal funds.

Among the most heavily impacted services are:

Research Library in Tumwater:

The loss of staff positions will significantly reduce public service hours and may result in full closure to the public. Access to important historical and governmental collections will be restricted. The State Switchboard phone line, which receives thousands of phone calls each year, will go unanswered, and email inquiries will no longer receive timely responses. Additionally, subscriptions to newspaper and genealogy databases will be discontinued, and the acquisition of new materials will be drastically limited.

Washington Talking Book & Braille Library (WTBBL) in Seattle:

WTBBL, the state's only accessible library service for people with print disabilities, faces severe cuts. The facility may be closed to the public, phone support will be reduced to responding to messages, and circulation and registration services may be slowed. The production of braille and audio materials could also be reduced or suspended. These disruptions jeopardize equitable access to information for some of Washington's most vulnerable residents.

Washington's Office of the Secretary of State oversees areas within state government including managing state elections, registering corporations and charities, and governing the use of the state flag and state seal. The office operates the State Archives and the State Library, documents extraordinary stories in Washington's history through Legacy Washington, and administers the Combined Fund Drive for charitable giving by state employees and

the [Productivity Board](#) state employee suggestion program. The Secretary of State oversees the state's [Address Confidentiality Program](#) to help protect survivors of crime and the [Civic Engagement Program](#) to increase governmental trust and participation for all Washingtonians.

[Current Procurements](#)

[Interlocal Agreements](#)

[Forecasted Needs Report](#)

[Resources For Vendors](#)

[Employment](#)

[Website Accessibility](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

Washington Secretary of
State
Legislative Building
PO Box 40220
Olympia, WA 98504-0220
secretaryofstate@sos.wa.gov
[Phone Numbers](#)



Words & Money

In a Major Win for Libraries, Federal Judge Orders IMLS to Be Restored

Andrew Richard Albanese

13 May 2025 3 min

In a thorough rebuke, federal judge John G. McConnell has ordered the Trump administration to immediately reverse the mass terminations of grants and staff at IMLS.



Finally, some good news for the library community. On May 13, federal judge John G. McConnell in Rhode Island issued a sweeping preliminary injunction blocking [Trump administration officials from acting on the president's March 14 executive order](#) to dismantle the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Furthermore, the court ordered the administration to immediately takes steps to restore the agency's employees and grant funding activities.

The injunction comes a week after McConnell on May 6 granted the plaintiffs' motion in a [lawsuit filed on April 4 by 21 states](#), finding that Trump's controversial executive order, and the subsequent actions taken by administration officials to implement it, likely violate the Administrative Procedures Act and the Constitution.

The injunction is a major victory for library supporters in that it seeks to reverse the job cuts at the agency, as well as to restore vital funding to libraries and individuals in some 59 states and territories.

Specifically, McConnell ordered the Trump administration to:

- Promptly take all necessary steps to reverse any “policies, memoranda, directives, or actions” aimed at complying with Trump’s March 14 executive order.
- Refrain from “any further actions to eliminate” the IMLS pursuant to the executive order.
- Take all necessary steps to restore all “employees and personal service contractors who were involuntarily placed on leave or involuntarily terminated.”
- Refrain from any further attempts to “pause, cancel, or otherwise terminate” IMLS grants or contracts other than in cases where grantees or contractors have not complied with their terms.
- Take “immediate steps to resume the “processing, disbursement, and payment of already awarded funding, and to release awarded funds previously withheld or rendered in accessible” due to the executive order.

The court further ordered a status report “within seven days” confirming that the Trump Administration is in “full compliance” or explaining why “compliance is not practicable.”

The ruling applies to IMLS as well as two other Congressionally appointed agencies targeted by Trump: The Minority Business and Development Agency and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

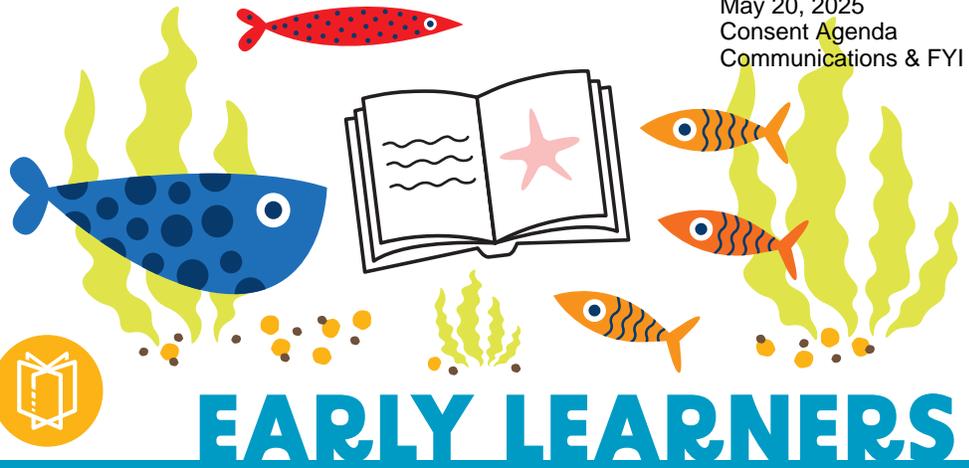
The injunction comes as a second court also considers the scope of an injunction in a parallel case brought by the American Library Association. On May 1, federal judge Richard J. Leon in Washington D.C. [issued a temporary restraining order \(TRO\) blocking the further dismantling of the IMLS.](#)

Meanwhile, in Congress, library supporters are also seeking to counter the [administration’s proposed elimination of the IMLS in its FY 2026 budget blueprint.](#)

The injunction comes over the objections of DOJ lawyers, who in a notice filed on May 9 that complained of “implementation ambiguities,” telling the court that the the injunction isn’t specific enough—an interesting complaint, given that the administration’s indiscriminate slashing of the agencies in question was directly at issue in the case.

“The broad language of the proposed order could potentially sweep in almost all activities that occurred since March 14, 2025, particularly in light of the reference to actions that are taken ‘in whole or in part’ with respect to an Executive Order that itself is broadly defined,” DOJ lawyers argue. “At a minimum, this could lead to confusion over the scope of the order.”

DOJ lawyers also raised concerns about meeting the order’s seven-day deadline. “Because the proposed order requires sweeping relief across various agencies, Defendants may not be able to fully implement its provisions within seven days,” DOJ lawyer warn. “Specifically, impediments outside Defendants’ control such as access to technology and office space may delay complete implementation, to the extent that implementation would, for example, require all employees to be back in their pre-March 14 offices by a certain date.”



EARLY LEARNERS

TALKING

SINGING

READING

WRITING

PLAYING

Talk about what you did today	Make up a song about what you are doing	Snuggle up and read	Zip a zipper	Go on a nature walk
Say hello in different languages	Learn a new song or rhyme	Read outside	Draw something	Play with spoons
Make transportation noises	Sing a song fast, then slow	MAKE IT YOURS! Change any square you want.	Make a list of people you love	Have a dance party
Describe the people in your family	Sing in the bath	Act out a story	Write/draw a thank you note for someone	Play with water
Find circles around your home	Sing a favorite song	Read the pictures in a book	Use your hands to sing "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star"	Make faces in the mirror

Name: _____ Age: _____

School (Fall 2025): _____

Early Learners SUMMER READING

June 1 – August 31

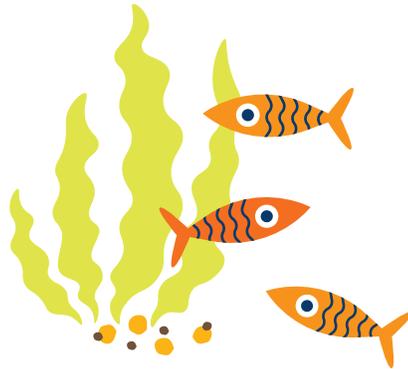
1. Talk, sing, read, write and play this summer. Do as many of the card activities as you want. Check them off as you go or draw a picture. Feel free to change any of the activities to suit your child's needs.

2. When you finish your activities, come to any Bellingham Public Library location to **receive a:**

- **Free book**
- **Special prize**
- **Summer Reading Superstar yard/window sign**

3. Celebrate! You did it!

The last day to receive prizes is August 31, 2025.



Bellingham Public Library Locations

Central Library

210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98225

Fairhaven Branch

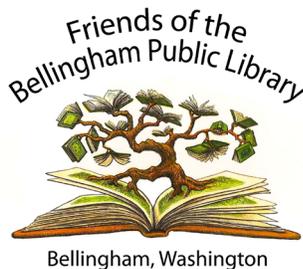
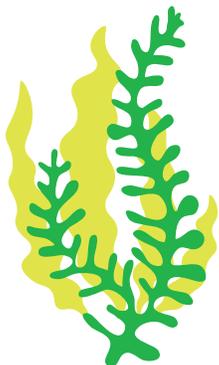
1117 12th Street
Bellingham, WA 98225

Barkley Branch

3111 Newmarket St.
Suite 103
Bellingham, WA 98226

Bellis Fair Branch

Bellis Fair Mall, Suite 616
Bellingham, WA 98226



Bellingham Public Library

bellingshampubliclibrary.org



KIDS

Wordless	Makes you laugh	Biography	Cover you didn't like	Read a book that's a movie/TV show
Poetry	Read with a flashlight	Listen to a book	Your choice	Make a postcard
Animal	Graphic novel	<p>MAKE IT YOURS! Change any square you want.</p>	Share a book with a friend	Book you'd like to be in
Read a recipe	Folktale	Picture book	Read in bed	Author you've never read before
Read outside	Nonfiction	Read on a Sunday	Loved it	Draw your favorite character

SUMMER READING

June 1 – August 31, 2025

Name: _____ Grade (Fall 2025): _____

School (Fall 2025): _____

Kids SUMMER READING

June 1 – August 31

1. **Set your Summer Reading Goal.** Make it yours!

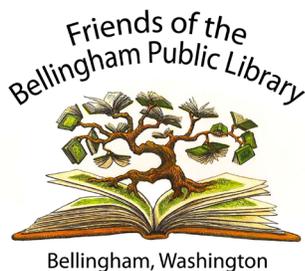
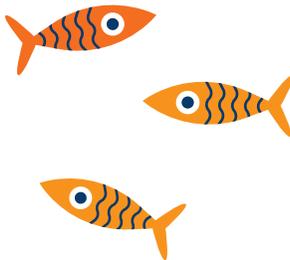
My goal is: _____

2. Once you've met your goal, come to any Bellingham Public Library location and receive a:

- **Mystery coupon**
- **Free book**
- **Summer Reading Superstar yard/window sign**

3. **Celebrate! You did it!**

The last day to receive prizes is August 31, 2025.



Bellingham
Public Library

bellingshampubliclibrary.org

Bellingham Public Library Locations

Central Library

210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98225

Fairhaven Branch

1117 12th Street
Bellingham, WA 98225

Barkley Branch

3111 Newmarket St.
Suite 103
Bellingham, WA 98226

Bellis Fair Branch

Bellis Fair Mall, Suite 616
Bellingham, WA 98226



Emotional	Great cover	Nonfiction	One word title	Read a short story
Read out loud	Recommended to me	Non-human characters	Funny	Out of this world
Made me smile	Childhood favorite	FREE SPACE	Read outside	Picture Book
Mysterious	Graphic novel	Re-read a favorite	Start a new series	Tough topic
Set in another time	Play a game	Couldn't finish or didn't like	Watch something with subtitles	Should be a movie

SUMMER READING

June 1 – August 31, 2025

Name: _____ School (Fall 2025): _____

Email or Phone #: _____ Age: _____

Teen SUMMER READING

June 1 – August 31

1. **Complete any five squares** this summer and be entered to win fun prizes. One prize entry for every five squares completed. (A blackout = five entries.)
2. Bring your completed card to any Bellingham Public Library location by August 31 to **choose a free book to keep** and be **entered in prize drawings**.
3. **Have fun!**



Bellingham Public Library Locations

Central Library

210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98225

Fairhaven Branch

1117 12th Street
Bellingham, WA 98225

Barkley Branch

3111 Newmarket St.
Suite 103
Bellingham, WA 98226

Bellis Fair Branch

Bellis Fair Mall, Suite 616
Bellingham, WA 98226

Friends of the
Bellingham Public Library



Bellingham, Washington



Bellingham
Public Library

bellingshampubliclibrary.org



Graphic novel	Bad ending	Great cover	From your TBR pile	Did not finish
Whatcom READS	Go digital	Audiobook	Start a new series	Binge-worthy
Tearjerker	Whodunnit?	FREE READ	Vacation spot	Recommendation
Out of this world	Published in 2025	Banned book	The future	Indie darling
By a BIPOC author	Award winner	Spooky	Fast paced	Re-read a favorite

Name: _____

Email or Phone #: _____

Adult SUMMER READING

June 1 – August 31

1. **Complete any five squares** this summer and enter to win fun prizes. Reading counts in all formats.
2. Bring your completed card to any Bellingham Public Library location by August 31 to **receive a small reward** and be **entered in prize drawings**.
3. **Have fun!**



Bellingham Public Library Locations

Central Library

210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98225

Fairhaven Branch

1117 12th Street
Bellingham, WA 98225

Barkley Branch

3111 Newmarket St.
Suite 103
Bellingham, WA 98226

Bellis Fair Branch

Bellis Fair Mall, Suite 616
Bellingham, WA 98226

Friends of the
Bellingham Public Library



Bellingham, Washington



Bellingham Public Library

bellingshampubliclibrary.org

G.L.Incidents

Incident 3384

Incident Date and Time

05/06/2025 9:00 AM

Date Reported

05/06/2025

Report Author

Cameron Birman

Reporting Party

Staff witnesses

William Hamilton, Bethany Hoglund, Michelle Becker

Building

Central

Location

Lee Memorial Park

Keywords

[Dangerous, illegal or high-impact behavior](#)

Secondary Keywords

[Physical attack or fighting](#)

Incident Details

On May 6, 2025, at approximately 9AM, I observed a gray and orange tent in Lee Memorial Park on the north side of the Central Library. I contacted the tent to conduct a welfare check and advise no camping rules. The female occupant immediately became verbally abusive and started screaming profanities at me from inside the tent. She yelled that she would kill me multiple times and that I should be murdered. I called 911 to request LE assistance. She then exited the tent with a hammer in her left hand and started moving towards me in an aggressive manner. As I was backing away, William Hamilton began talking to her from a distance on the lawn. She put the hammer down as William was talking with her. I removed the hammer and took it a safe distance away from where she was located. The female, Anna Bella Roberts, then turned her attention back to me. As I was backing away, she struck me with her right hand several times in the shoulder and arm and pushed me repeatedly while continuing to make death threats. Prior to law enforcement arriving a large school group arrived at the park. Bethany and Michelle kept the children away from the ongoing incident.

Bellingham Police arrived and placed Anna Bella Roberts under arrest for assault and felony threats. She was transported from the scene. Her tent and items remained on the Lee Memorial Lawn. William and I packaged up her belongings and submitted a SeeClickFix to Public Works (SR#48617). Anna Bella Roberts was issued trespass for both Lee Memorial Park and Central Library for 5 years.

No account located in Polaris.

Additional Information

Edits / Updates

Patron

Name

Anna Bella Roberts

Approximate age

55

Perceived Gender

F

Perceived Race

White

Height

5-4

Weight

150

Physical Description

Strawberry blond hair, blue pants, red jacket.

Add another involved person?

No

Photo

Response

Action(s) Taken

9-911 Called; Trespass - Issued

Restriction Type

Trespass

Restriction Duration

5 years

Restriction Expires

05/05/2030

Patron Date of Birth

Library Card

Officers

Thompson

Case Number

25B-26120

Permanent Record

No

Edit

Close

Attachments



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, April 15, 2025 – Central Library Lecture Room
3:30 p.m.**

Minutes of Actions and Decisions of the Library Board of Trustees of the Bellingham Public Library as authorized by RCW 27.12.210 and SEC. 7.02 Charter of the City of Bellingham.

Board Members Present: Rebecca Craven, Kristy Van Ness, Kendra Bradford, Deborra Garrett, and Shirin Deylami
City Council Library Liaison: Hannah Stone
Library Management Staff: Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Katrina Buckman, Bethany Hogle, Jon McConnel and Jennifer Vander Ploeg
FOBPL Representative: Carol Comeau, Friends of BPL Board Liaison

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair, Rebecca Craven.

Approve/modify agenda: Deborra Garrett moved to approve the agenda. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: No public comment.

Consent agenda: Kendra Bradford moved to approve the March 18, 2025 Regular Meeting minutes, the March 28, 2025 Special Meeting minutes, and the March 2025 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Shirin Deylami moved, Kendra Bradford seconded. Motion carried.

Jon clarified that the large number of items removed from the collection, reflected in the statistics, was a batch process he does periodically throughout the year and conducted in February. It is the final step in withdrawing an item from the collection.

Board Chair report:

- Rebecca Craven gave kudos to all the staff who assisted with the medical incident referenced in the Director's Report.
- Rebecca Craven highlighted the upcoming retirement of Donna Graddock. Donna has worked at the library for 42 years and was at the Fairhaven Library for a long time, even issuing her children their first library cards. Congratulations to Donna!
- Committee meetings will not commence until June.

Board member reports:

- Deborra Garrett will not be at the May Board Meeting.

City Council liaison report:

- Hannah Stone wanted staff to know that the library's stressful workload is being acknowledged and talked about in many conversations with multiple groups she's a part of.
- Continuing to watch the State Legislature actions closely.

Friends of BPL report:

- The Friends Annual meeting is Saturday, April 19 at the Central Library.
- The next booksale is May 21 – 24.
- There is discussion within the Friends about reaching out to decision makers regarding cuts to the Library and Museum; they welcome talking points and advocacy tips from the Library.

Library Director report:

- Rebecca Judd reported that she's been receiving media requests regarding IMLS funding cuts. Concerning advocacy in this fast-moving environment, Rebecca's recommendation is for anyone wishing to advocate to reach out to legislators about *your* personal library story. Legislators are receiving many form letters; personal experience might resonate more. Also, please share the stories with us at the library.
- Wendy Jenkins returned April 2 as a leave replacement in the Administrative Assistant position. A big thank you to Wendy for stepping in to cover so quickly.
- National Library Week was last week. The Friends always celebrate Library staff on National Library Worker's Day - thank you! So many wonderful cookies!

1st Quarter Action Plan Report

- Rebecca reviewed the 2025 Action Plan, specifically addressing action items worked on in Quarter 1. Highlights include:
 - A staff survey and many conversations regarding safety at the library with community organizations and stakeholders.
 - The hiring of the City's Security Supervisor. Katrina Buckman and Jennifer Vander Ploeg were involved in the process. This position was filled and begins April 16.
 - A training focus on Fire Safety and Evacuation.
 - Many budget conversations, including weekly meetings by managers and supervisors.
 - Continued work on website accessibility as part of the Citywide project.
 - Planning work on a Book Club Social for adults in November.
 - Rescheduling Rebecca's City Council presentation on the Library to summer.
 - Regular meetings with the Whatcom Community Foundation regarding fundraising and the capital campaign for the Central Library renovation.

Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update

- Rebecca Judd shared the staff survey results in the Board Packet. The survey served as a touchpoint to see if we are on the right path regarding the staff-driven goals for 2025.
- Jargon clarification: ROC is "Rules of Conduct"

- Rebecca Judd attended the Housing Advisory Committee meeting last week. It is a group that meets every other month and consists of City staff, Whatcom County Health and Community Services Staff, Whatcom County Staff and other local organizations.
- Rebecca Judd thanked Hannah Stone for connecting her with two Whatcom County Council Members.
- At the City Council Committee of the Whole Meeting on April 14, Jason Korneliussen, COB Strategic Initiatives Manager – Health and Human Services, gave a presentation about the overview of his first 6 months on the job and the general landscape within his scope of work. He made particular mention of the struggles here at the library. His presentation ended with the observation that permanent affordable housing and emergency housing are both very important and need to be worked on simultaneously. Rebecca said this statement resonates with our experience at the library. Jason also attended the April Public Services staff meetings and explained his role with the City and what he’s experienced so far.
- Conversation ensued regarding the Lighthouse Mission and their daytime sheltering offerings. There was acknowledgement that their model leaves a community gap in daytime sheltering options.

Budget Planning Update:

- Following up from the Board Retreat, there was discussion regarding the proposed open hours adjustment. Kristy Van Ness voiced appreciation for the circulation data. Deborra Garrett moved to adjust the Central Library hours to 10am-6pm Monday – Thursday and add Tuesday 10am-2pm hours at the Bellis Fair Branch. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.
- Rebecca Judd said June 1 would likely be an appropriate start date for the new hours and will confirm with supervisors.

Central Library Renovation Update:

- WCF Letter of Agreement update
 - Rebecca read into the minutes the following from Whatcom Community Foundation: “Upon motion duly made, the Board unanimously approved a loan to the Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees for the remodel of the downtown Bellingham library branch. The loan is to be funded with earnings on The Robert Bragg & George Muldrow Endowment for the Bellingham Public Library with a maximum loan amount not to exceed the earnings balance of the fund (roughly \$1.5M).”
- Annette Bagley provided a 2025 Library Giving Day update. She first shared the history of Library Giving day, which we first participated in in 2020, raising \$1500 for Hot Spot Lending.
 - 2021: \$15,000 from 150 donors for anti-racist digital reading materials (during COVID and remodel closure)
 - 2022: \$11,761 for Community Voices Book Kits and Community Returns Bins (includes a \$2,400 donation from the Friends)
 - 2023: \$8,755 for Early Learning Installation at the Bellis Fair and Fairhaven Branch Libraries (includes a \$3,000 donation from the Friends). Note that this Giving Day was during Spring Break.
 - 2024: \$22,000 for unrestricted dollars for emerging needs (includes a \$5,000 match from the Friends).

- 2025: \$34,562 so far from more than 200 donors. We have a donor who is willing to match up to \$100,000, and we also have a \$5,000 match from the Friends. We will now transition the campaign from Library Giving Day to the Bellingham Central Library Renovation Fund
- A big thank you to everyone who donated and shared the campaign.
- March 28, 2025 Special Board Meeting update
 - Rebecca talked with Ruth Baleiko from Miller Hull regarding the question of restrooms on the lower and upper level of the Central Library. We can limit the lower level restrooms to youth and families. However, staff are concerned that two restrooms on the main level will not be sufficient. Rather, could the restrooms on the main floor be redesigned to accommodate more stalls? Rebecca recommends considering this when planning the main floor work.
 - Conversation ensued about public meeting rooms and how public meeting rooms for adults will need to have adjacent adult-accessible bathrooms. Rebecca Judd acknowledged that public space planning is complicated and difficult in our building; there are many competing needs for our limited space.
 - Rebecca Judd reported that Ruth and her team are familiar with the study pods introduced/discussed at the special meeting.
 - The next Project Charter Group meeting is scheduled for May 7.
 - Rebecca Judd reported she re-submitted the Federal appropriation grant proposal for the exterior work (2 million) for the FY2026 process. Rick Larson's office reached out to Rebecca to invite this re-submittal.

Strategic Planning

- Rebecca Craven proposed that she, Kristy Van Ness and Rebecca Judd work together to bring suggested next steps for Strategic Planning to the Board for discussion at a later meeting.
- Rebecca Judd is working on a narrative for the City's 5-year Comprehensive Plan. She asked Board members to read, review and provide feedback of the draft.
 - This narrative will be going into the Capital Facilities Plan and is meant to be very high-level and readable, rather than technical.
 - Rebecca Craven asked Board Members to read, review and get comments and feedback to her and Kristy by April 29. The edited draft will be included in the May Board packet for review and discussion at the May Meeting.

New Business:

- The May Board Meeting will be at the Bellis Fair Branch Library.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Christine Perkins (WCLS) asked to attend a Board Meeting to talk about the upcoming WCLS Levy in August.

Meeting adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting Tuesday, May 20, 2025 – Bellis Fair Branch Library – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST
Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

DRAFT

Bellingham Public Library - Performance & Activity Measures, 2025

	May		Year to Date		YTD comparison
	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025 with 2024
Holdings - Number of materials in the library's collection					
Physical copies added to the collection	1,221	1,493	6,542	7,421	-11.84%
Electronic copies purchased by BPL	79	124	479	506	-5.34%
Physical copies withdrawn from collection	(490)	(369)	(6,031)	(1,695)	255.81%
Total physical holdings			182,889	179,595	1.83%
Total electronic holdings available to BPL			168,270	138,767	21.26%
Total Holdings (Physical and Electronic)			351,159	318,362	10.30%
Circulation - Number of items checked out or renewed; includes Interlibrary Loan and Outreach activity					
Central Library					
Adult	38,392	40,254	156,726	163,950	-4.41%
Youth	40,422	41,564	162,289	160,890	0.87%
Sub-Total Central	78,814	81,818	319,015	324,840	-1.79%
Fairhaven Branch					
Adult	4,970	4,857	19,731	19,575	0.80%
Youth	2,687	2,471	10,806	9,502	13.72%
Sub-Total Fairhaven	7,657	7,328	30,537	29,077	5.02%
Barkley Branch					
Adult	4,371	4,480	18,465	18,427	0.21%
Youth	4,822	3,701	19,589	15,667	25.03%
Sub-Total Barkley	9,193	8,181	38,054	34,094	11.61%
Bellis Fair Branch					
Adult	1,083	1,288	5,170	4,975	3.92%
Youth	1,993	1,925	8,338	7,642	9.11%
Sub-Total Bellis Fair	3,076	3,213	13,508	12,617	7.06%
Bellingham Technical College					
Adult	56	47	187	115	62.61%
Youth	17	5	31	28	10.71%
Sub-Total BTC	73	52	218	143	52.45%
Whatcom Community College					
Adult	161	116	746	586	27.30%
Youth	19	66	90	131	-31.30%
Sub-Total WCC	180	182	836	717	16.60%
Western Washington University					
Adult	273	226	1,194	797	49.81%
Youth	49	59	271	312	-13.14%
Sub-Total WWU	322	285	1,465	1,109	32.10%
Sub-Total Physical	99,315	101,059	403,633	402,597	0.26%
Online Services					
Kanopy	1,831	1,726	8,091	7,937	1.94%
NW Anytime Library Overdrive	39,826	39,636	163,930	163,723	0.13%
Overdrive Magazines	7,661	4,471	30,825	26,946	14.40%
Sub-Total Online	49,318	45,833	202,846	198,606	2.13%
Total Circulation	148,633	146,892	606,479	601,203	0.88%
Holds Activity					
Items placed on hold shelf	49,367	50,099	208,106	210,846	-1.30%
Services					
Persons Visiting - Number of persons counted as they enter the libraries					
Central Library	32,598	30,317	132,152	118,208	11.80%
Fairhaven Branch	3,366	3,346	13,467	12,574	7.10%
Barkley Branch	2,519	2,428	10,276	10,305	-0.28%
Bellis Fair Branch	1,476	2,041	8,429	9,221	-8.59%
Total Persons Visiting	39,959	38,132	164,324	150,308	9.32%
Website Visits					
This count reflects number of visits to www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org					
Bibliocommons Visits	40,243	41,015	169,003	173,626	-2.66%
This count reflects number of visits to Bibliocommons					
Total Website Visits	65,228	77,156	271,318	297,749	-8.88%
Computer Usage - Number of sessions					
Central Library					
Adult & Teen (29 terminals)	3,509	3,271	14,356	12,746	12.63%
Childrens (3 terminals)	50	67	324	274	18.25%
Fairhaven Branch (6 terminals)	274	274	985	971	1.44%
Barkley Branch (4 terminals)	139	168	523	669	-21.82%
Bellis Fair Branch (4 terminals)	102	122	516	535	-3.55%
Total Computer Usage	4,074	3,902	16,704	15,195	9.93%
New Borrowers Registered					
Central Library	572	606	2,404	2,531	-5.02%
Fairhaven Branch	25	34	149	125	19.20%
Barkley Branch	25	26	114	104	9.62%
Bellis Fair Branch	37	49	180	231	-22.08%
Total New Borrowers Registered	659	715	2,847	2,991	-4.81%
Programs - Library sponsored or co-sponsored educational, recreational, or cultural programs					
Programs	113	110	476	414	14.98%
Attendees	2,092	2,593	9,752	9,900	-1.49%
Volunteer Hours	370	329	1,703	1,804	-5.59%

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

APRIL 2025 CLAIMS

LIST OF CLAIMS AGAINST THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES AND THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM TO BE CONSIDERED AND APPROVED AT THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF MAY 20, 2025, IN ACCORDANCE WITH RCW 27.12.210 AND 27.12.240.

	VENDOR	AMOUNT
Materials, Equipment and Supplies		
Key duplicates	Accurate Lock & Security	18.31
Books; DVDs; supplies; headsets; cables	Amazon	1,855.31
Books	Baker & Taylor	22,702.50
Mendery tape	Barbizon Electric	166.06
Periodicals	Bellingham Herald	1,355.45
Greeting cards	Bison Bookbinders	7.09
Fairhaven printer	Copiers Northwest	1,293.23
Cabinet door replacement	Ghent	134.65
Mendery supplies	Kapco	996.60
Lost Interlibrary loan	Lake Oswego Public Library	26.00
Mendery tape	The Library Store	243.42
Lecture Room podium light	Littlite	134.92
Books	Manufacturers' Books	226.90
DVDs, CDs, recorded books	Midwest Tape	2,181.70
Vehicle fuel	Nelson-Reisner Distributor	281.32
Office supplies	ODP Business Solutions	362.91
Lost Interlibrary loan	Pierce County Library System	35.00
Periodicals	Sound Publishing	141.00
Mendery tape	StageSpot	170.69
Labels	Sticky Business	520.72
Mendery supplies	Thermobind	76.30
Interlibrary loan supplies & mendery labels	ULINE Shipping Supplies	443.13
Lost Interlibrary loan	WSU Libraries	55.00
	Materials, Equipment & Supplies Sub Total	\$33,428.21
Services and Interfund Charges		
Bellis Fair Branch cleaning	Advantage Building Services	1,477.66
Director membership	American Library Association	210.00
Hotspot service	AT&T	18.24
Preprocessing	Baker & Taylor	6,595.35
Bellis Fair Branch lease	Bellis Fair Mall Territories	5,357.00
Pest management	BioBug	218.00
Natural gas service	Cascade Natural Gas	820.46
Banking & credit card fees	City of Bellingham Interfund	29.51
Computer replacement allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	20,635.92
Facilities allocation (Central & Fairhaven)	City of Bellingham Interfund	79,950.00
Fleet Services	City of Bellingham Interfund	1,510.00
IT Service allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	24,586.71
Postage	City of Bellingham Interfund	936.68
Qualified Energy Conservation Bond sinking fund	City of Bellingham Interfund	2,275.59

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

APRIL 2025 CLAIMS

Radio Communications Allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	685.76
Risk Management	City of Bellingham Interfund	8,430.72
Technology replacement allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	8,784.76
Telecom Services	City of Bellingham Interfund	3,009.37
Water/Sewer/SSW service (Central & Fairhaven)	City of Bellingham Interfund	1,270.23
Copies	Copier Northwest	28.45
Alarm system monitoring	Guardian Security	176.10
Graphic Design	Katrina Lyon Design	425.00
Copier leases and copies	Kelley Create	1,255.16
Preprocessing	Midwest Tape	289.90
OLA Conference registrations	Oregon Library Association	726.00
eBooks, eAudiobooks	Overdrive Inc	8,734.56
Bellis Fair internet service	Pogozone Wireless	367.49
Waste disposal service	Sanitary Service Company	1,351.99
Digital subscription	Seattle Times	19.96
Barkley Branch operating costs	Talbot Services LLC	533.33
Microfische machine lease	Technology Unlimited	340.08
Security software subscription	Trebron	3,121.76
Borrower notices	Unique Management	290.90
1st Q borrower notices	WCLS	2,092.63

Services and Interfund Charges Sub Total \$186,555.27

Gift Fund

Books; cardstock	Amazon.com	683.96
Community Outreach printing	Applied Digital Imaging	94.83
Books	Baker & Taylor	1,164.82
Books	Center Point Large Print	211.64
Recorded books	Midwest Tapes	488.18
eBooks, eAudiobooks	Overdrive Inc	2,152.71
Wonderbooks	Playaway Productions	1,160.48
Trauma-informed librarians webinar	TID Society	130.00
Adult prize mailing	USPS	7.30

GIFT FUND OUTLAYS Sub Total \$6,093.92

Total General Fund claims 219,983.48

Total General Fund & Gift Fund claims 226,077.40



Library - Budget to Actual - General Fund

April 2025 33% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Grants	0	0		
Print and Copy Fees	5,462	15,000	9,538	36%
Lost, Damage & Non-resident Borrower Fees	4,185	16,100	11,915	26%
Fairhaven Auditorium Rental Fees	0	5,000	5,000	0%
Miscellaneous Revenues	528	0	(528)	
Total Revenue	10,175	36,100	25,925	28%
Expenses				
Salaries and Wages	1,152,783	3,369,234	2,216,451	34%
Personnel Benefits	474,224	1,368,283	894,059	35%
Physical Materials, Equipment and Supplies	76,513	307,932	231,419	25%
Services, Digital Materials and Interfund	1,005,456	2,672,160	1,666,704	38%
Total Expenditure	2,708,976	7,717,608	5,008,633	35%

Library - Budget to Actual - Gift Fund

April 2025 33% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Donations	63,386	150,000	86,614	42%
Total Revenue	63,386	150,000	86,614	42%
Expenses				
Gift Fund expenses	15,989	50,000	34,011	32%
Total Expenditure	15,989	50,000	34,011	32%

QUARTERLY DONATION REPORT for LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2025 - 1st Quarter Donations to Library Gift Fund

Date	Received from:	Amount	Purpose:
2/19/2025	WCF Gonzalves FH	\$616.49	Unrestricted
2/19/2025	WCF Gonzalves Spanish/Travel	\$2,465.94	Unrestricted
2/19/2025	WCF Bayview Fund	\$2,850.93	Children's Materials
2/19/2025	WCF BPL Designated Endowment	\$3,362.93	Unrestricted
3/4/2025	Individual	\$50.00	Unrestricted
3/12/2025	CLEL Grant	\$500.00	Bilingual board books
3/14/2025	Individual	\$200.00	Unrestricted
3/20/2025	Individual	\$50.00	Unrestricted
3/31/2025	Misc Donations January-March	\$97.00	Unrestricted
TOTAL		\$10,193.29	

2025 - 1st Quarter Donations to Library Funds at Whatcom Community Foundation

Date	Received from:	Amount	Fund
3/6/2025	Individual	\$500.00	Materials
3/29/2025	Anonymous	\$200.00	Materials
1/17/2025	Individual	\$30.00	Unrestricted
3/13/2025	Individual	\$25.00	Unrestricted
3/25/2025	Individuals	\$200.00	Unrestricted
3/26/2025	Individuals	\$225.00	Unrestricted
3/30/2025	Individuals	\$100.00	Unrestricted
TOTAL		\$1,280.00	

2025 - 1st Quarter Gift Fund balances (as of 5/14/25)

<u>Whatcom Community Foundation</u>		
Bragg - Muldrow Endowment - Spendable portion		\$896,803.54
Capital (\$121,627 designated for Fairhaven Branch capital improvements)		\$270,332.58
Fairhaven Branch Materials		\$9,769.94
Materials		\$15,592.81
Unrestricted		\$91,217.57
Library Giving Day		\$21,094.32
Renovation		\$58,932.61
	TOTAL	\$1,363,743.37
<u>Library Gift Fund</u>		
(Variety of designated funds including \$265,008.87 in WCF distributions)		\$408,153.02
	GRAND TOTAL	\$1,771,896.39
Designated Endowment Fund (Held at WCF, principal total)		\$70,668.14



DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR May 20, 2025

On May 12, Whatcom County Health and Community Services presented to County Council on three topics of interest to BPL: last winter's severe weather shelter (SWS), the 5-year Homeless Housing Plan, and shelter recommendations from a subcommittee of the Housing Advisory Committee. The presentations and packet materials can be accessed at <https://whatcom.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx> and include a brief Council-level discussion of the need for a dedicated day shelter in our community. Several County Council members also mentioned the present impacts on BPL. That same evening, I attended the public comment portion of the meeting to speak directly to our experience at the Library. (Rebecca Judd, Library Director)

WELCOME & INCLUDE

Skillshare Changes: This month we transitioned responsibility for Skillshare from Community Relations Specialist Jenni Johnson (who has done an incredible job with this program since its inception many years ago), to Library Events Coordinator Miranda LeonJones. This will hopefully free up some capacity for Jenni to work on promotions for our increasing number of Library programs and events. A few new Skillshare topics this month included "Finding Help with whatcomresources.org" and "Embracing Your Mental Health," as well as "PSE: Energy Efficiency and Energy Assistance," which is coming up on May 29 at 11 am. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Welcoming New Library Assistants: We had a huge response to our recent posting to fill Library Assistant vacancies. We received a record 289 applications in the ten days that the posting was open. Interviews are planned for the week of May 19-23 and we plan to offer interviews to the top 24 candidates. From this process we plan to fill our vacant positions and create a list that we can draw from for the next 6 months if other positions are vacated. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)



Lee Memorial Park Clean-up: The Parks Department has begun clean-up of the Lee Memorial Park (the library lawn). This project will include cleanup of the spaces adjacent to the Library's lower level as well as the unruly shrubbery near the Lecture Room emergency exit. This Parks project is intended to improve safety, sightlines, maintenance and useability of

the park; with the intention that the park will go through a more formal review and design process in future years. We appreciate that Parks included us in the planning for this project and incorporated some of our landscape safety concerns in this initiative. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY

HEART Impacts on BPL Staff: In early 2024, Bellingham Public Library conducted a survey to determine a baseline for staff confidence and agreement with a number of questions relating to: knowledge of behavioral health resources, ability to respond to a behavioral crisis, and general safety during and after an event. The survey questions were asked again in November, after HEART had been established in the Library for about ten months. BPL Staff reported increased agreement with the following statements which directly related to the HEART program. This data was shared with Whatcom County Health and Community Services along with other feedback staff have shared since the start of the HEART program.

- "I knew where to find up-to-date information detailing current community resources available to patrons." (+10%)
- "I had the resources and tools to connect people experiencing a behavioral health crisis to supportive services." (+28%)
- "When responding to a behavioral health crisis at BPL, I had clear expectations and guidelines for my role and how it related to others." (+13%)
- "When a behavioral health crisis happened at the library, I was confident that I could make an immediate connection between a patron in need and a resource provider." (+43%)
- "I had the resources and tools required to protect my physical safety while completing my job duties." (+15%)
- "The City of Bellingham, Bellingham Public Library, and/or community partners introduced effective tools to help me manage impacts to my well-being following involvement with a patron's behavioral health crisis." (+5%)
- "I am confident that Library HEART Specialists' ability to deescalate and refer patrons to resources will have a positive impact on library spaces and services." (+27%)

(Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Item Request Change implemented: On May 1 we implemented a change in the monthly per-patron limit for item requests, decreasing it from 10 to 5. So far we have seen a moderate decrease in in-coming requests, which is helping selectors with their purchasing decisions. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

READ & LEARN

Summer Reading Begins June 1: We are thrilled to invite community members of all ages to participate in our Summer Reading program, June 1 – August 31. We have four programs this year:

- **Early Learners:** Kids ages birth – 5 years are invited to complete activities that get them talking, singing, reading, writing and playing! Finishers will receive a free book, finger puppet and Summer Reading SUPERSTAR yard/window sign.
- **Kids:** Kids ages 5 – 12 are invited to set an individual goal for their reading this summer. Finishers will receive a free book, mystery coupon from a community partner and Summer Reading SUPERSTAR yard/window sign.



- Teens: Youth ages 12 – 19 are invited to complete any five squares on their Summer Reading card. Finishers receive a free book and are entered to win prize drawings.
- Adults (18+) are invited to complete any five squares on their Summer Reading card. Finishers will be entered to win a prize drawing.

Special programs this summer include Library Night with the Bellingham Bells (June 26), two Children’s Craft Fairs, Lego building, middle grade book club, storytimes and more! Thank you to the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library who sponsor Summer Reading, and to our many local businesses who sponsor the mystery coupon program for children. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

Spanish Collections: Children’s Librarian Ali Kubeny is the Spanish language materials selector for Children’s, Teen and Adult collections. In the past year, Ali created a Teen Spanish collection, developed and refined the Adult and Children’s Spanish collections, brought Spanish collections to all BPL locations, improved browsing for all bilingual Children’s books (not just Spanish language) by adding a visible sticker to the spine label, and curated booklists in Spanish. This dedication is paying off. Circulation of Spanish language collections has increased across all age groups. Additionally, we worked with our book vendor, Baker & Taylor, to set up pre-processing for these collections which will increase efficiency in processing and cataloging these collections. Special thanks to Head of Digital Services Jon McConnel, Library Processing Specialist Amy Lathrop, Acquisitions Specialist Nate Dalgas and Cataloging Specialist Melissa Seale for helping to make these projects come to successful fruition. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

INFORM & INVOLVE

Book Recommendations at the Friends of the Library’s Annual Meeting: Adult Services Librarian Katie Bray presented, “Katie’s Hand-Picked Reads for 2025” at the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library’s Annual Meeting on April 19. A repeat presenter, Katie again wowed the crowd with ten of her most recommended upcoming 2025 titles. These titles can be found on the “Staff Picks” page in the library catalog, under “NOTABLE PICKS.” Thank you to Katie for continuing to be a highly-anticipated part the annual meeting. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)



Summer Reading Promotions: In preparation for a new season of Summer Reading beginning June 1, Community Relations specialist Jenni Johnson has secured and produced 1,425 prize coupons from 16 local partners. These will be given out to kids ages 5 to 12 who successfully complete their Summer Reading activity card and return it to a BPL branch library. Our 2025 prize partners are: The Bagelry, Boomers, Colophon Cafe, Emerald City Smoothies, Great Harvest, It’s the Sweet Things, Mammoth Mini Golf, Pizza Time, PlayDate BLI, Pure Bliss Desserts, Ruckus Room, Shirlee Bird Cafe, SPARK Museum, and Yeager’s Toyland. The Library’s [Summer Reading webpage](#) has also been updated with 16 versions of the Summer Reading activity cards in four languages, and a variety of reading recommendations from staff. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Whatcom Literacy Council

Trivia Bee: The two BPL teams did very well at this year's Trivia Bee. Team Overdue for a Win (Rob Werner, Lorena Lytle, and James Jacobson) came in #13 out of 33, and Team Operation Don't Come in Last (Audrey Schreiner, Kate Dunphy, and Jeff Stamey) came in at #16.



Thank you to all who represented the library by competing. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

APIDA Event: On Wed., May 14, BPL Events Coordinator Miranda LeonJones participated in hosting the community-wide Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) Heritage Month celebration at Whatcom Community College. This year's theme "A Legacy of Resistance: Justice, Healing, and Joy" highlighted the shared journey of APIDA communities, encompassing a rich tapestry of traditions, languages, and histories rooted in resilience and celebration. The event featured a free meal, intergenerational conversations, cultural performances, and local vendors. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Media Coverage: On April 29, the Salish Current published "[Libraries rethink funding strategies after federal cuts](#)" by Syndee Chapman, which included a quote from Bellingham Public Library Director Rebecca Judd. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

THRIVE & GROW



Professional Development: Oregon Library Association Conference: Public Services Clerk Marissa Tavener (L), Public Services Librarian Liz Hendershott (Center), and Public Services Clerk Arbor Hoff (R) attended the Oregon Library Conference April 23-25. A few highlights of the conference included sessions on: Book Mending ([Save Your Books | DIY Book Repair and Restoration Lessons](#)), The Evolving eBook Landscape, and 100 Healing Rainbows for Oregonians [Home - 100 Libraries - Healing](#)

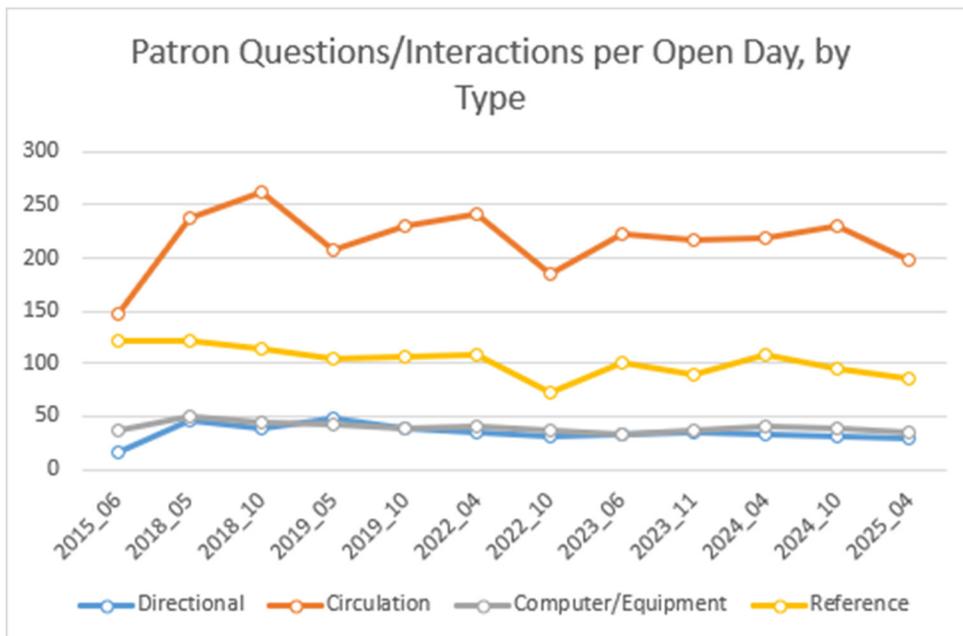
[Rainbow Light for Oregonians](#). (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

Fundraising for Renovation: At the close of April, communications related to fundraising shifted from "Library Giving Day" to "Support the Bellingham Central Library Renovation Fund." Generous donors have continued to contribute. As of May 12, the total at the Whatcom Community Foundation's Bellingham Central Library Renovation Fund is \$58,600. The additional match from an anonymous donor, as well as a match from the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library, brings this total to \$117,000. To date, the Library has now secured \$1.5 million toward our \$3.5 million community goal. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

IT Budget Planning: Rebecca and Jon recently met with colleagues from ITSD to discuss budget planning for 2026. We learned some helpful information about how ITSD prefers to fund technology projects related to facilities. They are asking for preliminary estimates for meeting room technology needs that are planned in the upcoming renovation by July 1 in order to make it into their 2026 budget request. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

Baker & Taylor Update: This month, there are several items to note regarding our primary vendor for print books. First, we have completed setup for Spanish-language pre-processing. Now that we are acquiring more titles in Spanish, it seemed worthwhile to have B&T handle cataloging and processing. We went through their in-take for new collections and are now at the point where we can start placing orders. Second, B&T continues to struggle to provide books from certain distributors, specifically Hachette and Macmillan. Since last fall they have not been getting stock on time or in sufficient quantities. They recently made the decision to cancel a large number of orders they don't think they'll be able to fulfill. For us they cancelled over 300 titles in a single batch, while a normal cancellation report has about 10 titles. So far we don't have information as to when they think this situation will resolve. Third, B&T is implementing new spine label printers, and new labels. This month the processing workflow will stop for a week or so while they clear their pipeline of items from their old workflow before switching us over to a new workflow that uses a new label printing system that offers different parameters. From what we've seen in samples, the new labels will be better and offer us more flexibility. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

Patron Tally Week: We held the first of our twice-yearly Patron Interaction Tally Weeks from April 21 - 27. Data from the survey is submitted to the State Library as part of the library's annual statistical report. This time we used a revised survey, after determining that we weren't using all of the detail collected by the previous one. Results were within expectations, though down a little from recent surveys. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)



Collection Review, Branch Pulls, and Additional Patron Messaging Duties: In light of Donna's recent retirement, Public Services staff will be helping route and withdraw books, doing more shelf pulls at branches, and handling additional patron messaging. Public Services, Operations, and Collection Services staff have been working diligently behind the scenes to create a clear rubric and work flow for these

duties. Librarians and Supervisors will be absorbing the billing tasks. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Facilities Update: Our contract for cleaning services at our Bellis Fair Mall branch will expire at the end of June. Bids were solicited by the City's Purchasing Staff in April. We received bids from 7 cleaning firms, and contracting is underway with the successful firm. We hope to have the contract in place before July 1 to ensure minimal disruption to service. This will be a one-year contract with the option for an additional year through extension. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Judd

LIBRARY LEVY PROPOSITION

Restore the Library Levy rate to \$0.42/\$1,000

WCLS's Board of Trustees is asking voters to restore the library levy rate to \$0.42 in response to increased costs and demand for services.

- Whatcom County Library System last asked voters to approve a levy lid lift in 2009. At that time, voters approved a rate of \$0.44 per thousand dollars.* WCLS has been frugal and strategic with its last levy lid lift annual funding and reserves.
- Since then, the number of people we serve and operating costs have significantly increased, and the library system's expenses now exceed annual revenues.

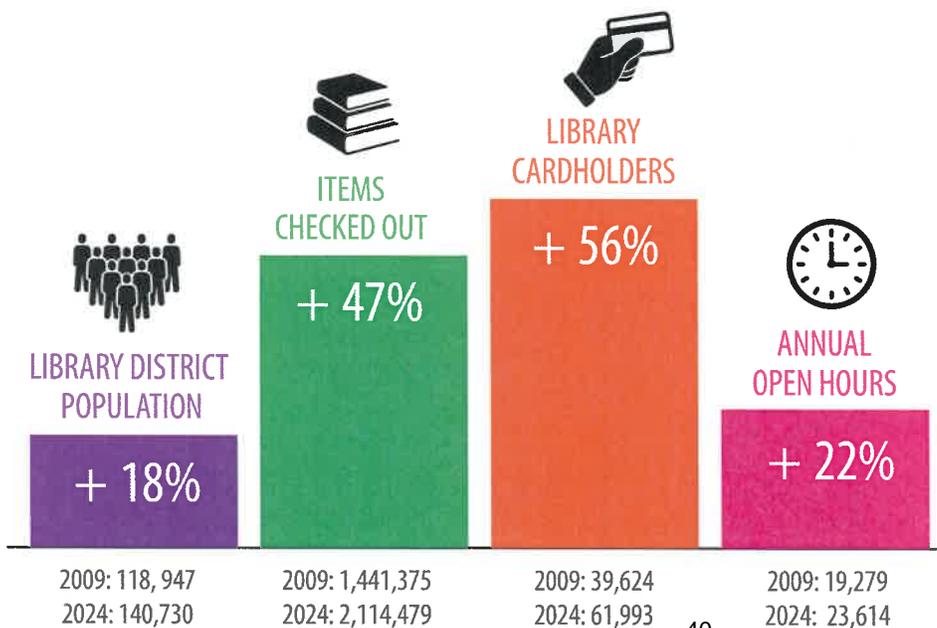


If the levy rate is not restored, the library will need to cut services and eliminate staff positions.

**In today's market, a levy rate of \$0.42 per thousand dollars of assessed value will provide sufficient funding to support current services and will sustain the system into the future. State law allows library systems to request up to \$0.50 per thousand dollars of assessed value. WCLS is asking for what it needs not the maximum allowed. Learn how levies work at wcls.org/levy.*



CHANGES SINCE LAST LEVY LID LIFT:



Inflation and other factors have driven up the cost of library materials, staff minimum wage, supplies, utilities and fuel.

For example:
In the past decade, the library's cost to purchase eBooks and eAudiobooks has increased 164%. In the past year alone, demand for eBooks and eAudio has increased 12%.

WHAT WOULD IT FUND?



HOW WOULD THIS NEW LEVY RATE AFFECT MY PROPERTY TAXES?

Local property taxes provide 95.1% of the library system's operating budget. If approved by voters, this proposition would authorize WCLS to restore its property tax levy rate from its current level of 26 cents to 42 cents per thousand dollars of assessed value.

HOME VALUE	ADDITIONAL YEARLY COST	ADDITIONAL MONTHLY COST
\$400,000	\$64	\$5
\$600,000	\$96	\$8
\$800,000	\$128	\$11

**Exemptions are available for qualifying seniors, people retired due to disabilities and veterans with disabilities.*

A YES VOTE MEANS:

- Maintain current level of staffing, open hours and services
- Continue supporting a robust collection of library materials, including physical and digital items, with minimal wait times and online/streaming resources
- Address deferred maintenance and facilities needs
- Pursue opportunities for library building projects

A NO VOTE MEANS:

- Cut staff, reduce open hours and eliminate services, which may include closing branches one or two days a week
- Reduce investment in library materials, including physical & digital items, increasing wait time and decreasing selection
- Cannot address deferred maintenance and facilities needs
- Abandon opportunities for library building projects

FIND MORE INFORMATION
wcls.org/levy



REGISTER TO VOTE
votewa.gov



For more information or to schedule a community presentation: levy@wcls.org

YOUR LIBRARY PROVIDES:

- **680,000+ items**, including books, eBooks, eAudiobooks, streaming movies and music
- Over **2,200 free programs** each year for children, teens and adults
- High-speed **WiFi, printers, computers and tech** assistance
- Public meeting **spaces for community** gatherings
- Friendly, **knowledgeable staff to help** with research, services and reading suggestions
- Library **services for K-12 students and support for homeschool families**
- Delivery of **library materials for homebound community** members
- Innovative "Library of Things" to save you money. Borrow **board games, Discover Passes, WiFi hotspots, American Girl Dolls** and more

WCLS SERVES PEOPLE ACROSS WHATCOM COUNTY WHO LIVE OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS OF BELLINGHAM

- **10 Library branches:** Blaine, Deming, Everson, Ferndale, Lummi Island, Lynden, Kendall, Point Roberts, Sudden Valley, Sumas
- **4 Bookmobile stops:** Glenhaven, Birch Bay, Wickersham, Lake Samish
- **Library Express locations:** Northwest Drive, Birch Bay (under construction)
- **Outreach services:** schools, senior centers, homebound patrons, Whatcom County Jail, events
- **Online** 24/7 wcls.org

City of Bellingham Comprehensive Plan – Bellingham Public Library Draft Text

Description of Current Services

The Bellingham Public Library (BPL) provides essential services to the community that support lifelong learning, digital access, and community connection. Across its locations, BPL offers access to print and digital materials, public computing and internet, research services and referrals, educational and cultural programs, and welcoming spaces for reading, studying, and gathering.

Over the next 10 years, the library will continue evolving to meet changing community needs, improve facility conditions, and expand access to services in all areas of Bellingham. BPL operates four library locations: the Central Library, Fairhaven Branch Library, Barkley Branch Library, and the Bellis Fair Branch Library. The Central Library, located in downtown Bellingham, is the largest and most heavily used location. It is currently undergoing phased renovations to update and improve space functionality, accessibility, and infrastructure. The Fairhaven and Barkley locations provide basic library services to the south and east areas of the city respectively. The Bellis Fair Branch Library, located in Bellis Fair Mall, launched in 2023 as a pilot to test service expansion in North Bellingham. Based on positive community response and usage, it has now become a permanently funded branch of the BPL system.

The addition of the Bellis Fair Branch as a library location represents a significant step in improving geographic equity in library access across the city. Looking ahead, the Library's Facilities Master Plan identifies ongoing needs to modernize aging infrastructure at existing libraries and explore expanding facilities in underserved areas of the city to ensure equitable access to library services for Bellingham's growing population.

As Bellingham faces ongoing challenges related to homelessness and housing instability, BPL remains one of the few public indoor spaces consistently open and welcoming to all. The library plays a vital role in providing connection, dignity, and access to resources for individuals experiencing hardship. At the same time, the growing presence of unmet social needs in our public spaces highlights the urgent need for a dedicated, daytime shelter for those who are unhoused in our community. This evolving reality has increased demands on library staff and infrastructure, making it essential to invest in training, compassionate approaches, and safety measures that ensure all community members feel respected in a shared, inclusive space.

BPL serves the residents of the City of Bellingham and is funded separately from the Whatcom County Library System (WCLS), which provides services to communities outside Bellingham city limits. WCLS manages its own network of libraries and offers rural outreach through its bookmobile and digital services. The two systems collaborate to provide countywide access to materials from both systems, enhancing the overall library experience for all residents of Whatcom County.

Additionally, Bellingham Public Library has cultivated partnerships with Western Washington University, Bellingham Technical College, and Whatcom Community College to offer public library services, such as

holds pick-up, check out and return, and public library catalog access on their campuses. Through the ConnectED partnership with Bellingham Public Schools, every student in the district is automatically provided access to BPL services, removing barriers to library use and supporting student learning.

Level of Service Standards

From 2015 to 2018 the Bellingham Public Library (BPL) Board of Trustees worked with library management to develop a series of Level of Service (LOS) standards to evaluate how resources allocated to Bellingham Public Library benchmark against community needs and expectations. LOS standards were established in four major areas of library services:

- Library facilities – square footage per capita
- Open hours per week for the Central Library and for the library branches
- Library materials – expenditures per capita
- Library staffing in FTE

To develop these standards, peer libraries in Washington state and across the nation were used as benchmarks. Over the period studied, Bellingham Public Library consistently ranked in the top 10 in Washington State for circulation per capita, and in the top 5% in circulation per capita nationally. This demonstrated use and demand from the community also factored into the development of these LOS standards. Each standard identifies three levels of service:

1. Low or minimal – needed to provide basic library services
2. Medium or operational – allows the library to provide all needed services
3. High or optimal – allows the library to enhance services

In 2017, BPL and the City of Bellingham initiated a sustainability funding study for the library's future. The consulting firm BERK was hired to conduct the study and produce a report – “Bellingham Public Library Services and Funding Models Study,” published December 2017.

On November 13, 2017, BERK presented findings from the report to Bellingham City Council. At that meeting the City Council voted unanimously on the motion “...to direct the Administration to give recommendations to the Library Board of Trustees to move forward to Goal 2 *{i.e., medium/operational}* or 3 *{i.e., high/optimal}* as a priority.”

In 2022, the Level of Service standard for facilities was reviewed as part of the Facilities Master Plan and renewed. In 2024 the Level of Service standard for materials was updated to include an inflationary adjustment annually. The chart below shows progress against standards as measured Dec. 31, 2024.

Approved Level of Service Standards					
<u>Standard</u>	<u>Date of Adoption</u>	<u>Low/ Minimal</u> 1	<u>Medium/ Operational</u> 2	<u>High/ Optimal</u> 3	2024 Level (based on budget allocation)
Library Facilities-- Square ft/capita	01/19/2016 Renewed 9/2022	0.6	0.8	1.0	0.65
Open hours per week-- Central Library	06/21/2016	56	64	68	56 (includes Sundays open year-round)
Open hours per week-- Branch Libraries	06/21/2016	28	36	40	24 Barkley 24 Fairhaven 23 Bellis Fair
Library Materials-- Expenditures/capita	03/21/2017 Revised 8/2024	\$5.69 (2024)	\$8.53 (2024)	\$11.37 (2024)	\$7.54
Library Staff Total FTE	03/13/2018	50	58	64	57

Long Term Improvement Needs

Ensuring that the Bellingham Public Library (BPL) continues to meet the community's needs over the next decade requires aligning facility improvements with established Level of Service (LOS) standards. These standards, as outlined in the BPL Facilities Master Plan, are designed to ensure that library services are equitable, accessible, and effective as the city grows. Key benchmarks include providing sufficient square footage per capita with consistent and convenient hours of operation, ensuring spaces are accessible, welcoming and well-maintained, and offering and supporting current technology and materials.

Currently, BPL's facilities fall short of meeting the Medium/Operational and High/Optimal standard for square footage per capita, which is set at 1.0 square feet per person. As Bellingham's population increases, there is a pressing need to expand library spaces to keep pace with demand. Additionally, a gap exists in providing consistent operating hours across all locations, which limits access for residents. Increasing the size of library facilities and standardizing hours of operation are vital priorities as the library system adapts to community growth, and growing community needs.

The Central Library, located at 210 Central Avenue, serves as the main hub of BPL and has begun renovations to modernize its facilities. Phase 1, completed in 2021, focused on remodeling the main floor to create a more open concept, adding study rooms and restrooms, upgrading lighting to LED technology, and improving public seating. Phase 2, planned for 2025–2027, aims to complete the interior renovation, including the children and teen area on the lower floor and updated HVAC. Finally, the exterior of the Library will be renovated in Phase 3 to reflect its place as a modern and busy community space in Bellingham's downtown core. These improvements are designed to address the building's aging infrastructure and support the library's long-term service priorities of providing a welcoming, accessible, and safe environment for all community members. [Estimated cost for Phase 2 and exterior renovation = \$16M]

The Fairhaven Branch Library, situated at 1117 12th Street, operates within a historic building that requires ongoing maintenance to preserve its structural integrity and historical significance. Building needs include upgrading HVAC systems, completing recommended seismic upgrades, improving accessibility, and reconfiguring interior spaces to better support community programs and modern library technology and materials. Long-term service priorities involve expanding program offerings, increasing community engagement, and increasing hours of operation to better serve the surrounding neighborhood. [Estimated cost for improvements to existing space: \$4M-\$6M, excluding seismic upgrades]

The Barkley Branch Library, located at 3111 Newmarket Street, Suite 103, currently occupies a 1400 square-foot leased space that limits its capacity to expand services and library materials. Future considerations may involve relocating to a larger facility to better serve the growing population in the Barkley area. Long-term service priorities include enhancing materials and technological resources, increasing seating and study areas, implementing early literacy storytimes and other programming, and expanding hours of operation to meet the needs of a growing residential and commercial district. [Estimated cost for tenant improvements to expanded space: \$2M-\$4M]

The Bellis Fair Branch Library, established as a pilot project in 2023 within Bellis Fair Mall, has transitioned to a permanently funded branch due to positive community response and usage. Currently, the branch offers a selection of print materials, holds pick-up, computer access, and children's programming. Future building needs may involve expanding the physical space to accommodate a broader range of services, materials, and meeting and gathering spaces for north side residents. Long-term service priorities focus on expanding early literacy storytimes and other program offerings, and increasing hours of operation to meet rising demand from North Bellingham residents. [Estimated cost for tenant improvements to expanded space: \$2M-\$4M]