



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, August 16, 2022 – Zoom meeting
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: Rick Osen, Jim McCabe, Rebecca Craven, Kristy Van Ness and Melissa Morin

Library Staff: Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Jon McConnel, Katie Bray and Wendy Jenkins

Others Present: Kristina Michele Martens, City Council Liaison; Leigh Ann Giles and Jennie Tuckerman, Friends of BPL Co-Presidents; Brad Waters and Alex Lamis, Godfrey's Associates

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair, Rick Osen. Rick welcomed Melissa to the Board. Brad Waters and Alex Lamis, architects for Godfrey's Associates, were introduced.

Approve/modify agenda: Jim McCabe moved to approve the agenda. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: No comments.

Consent agenda: Kristy Van Ness moved to approve the July 19, 2022 Regular meeting minutes and the July 2022 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report:

- Rebecca and Rick met with Mayor Fleetwood on August 4. The discussion centered on the Facilities Master Plan process and draft recommendations.
- Rebecca and Rick met with Melissa Morin on August 10 for a Library Board orientation meeting. Melissa will have a tour of Library facilities later in August.
- A formal letter has been sent to the Whatcom Community Foundation (WCF) to request that the Library's agency fund be transferred to the Library Gift Fund. This request will be on the agenda for the September meeting of the WCF Board. As discussed at the July Library Board meeting, this transfer back to the City will bring it into alignment with City accounting protocols.

- The September Library Board meeting will be held via Zoom.

Board member reports:

- No reports.

City Council liaison report:

- Kristina reported Council has been on break this month and will resume on August 29. They expect it to be a full agenda.

Friends of BPL report:

- Leigh Ann reported the next book sale will be on September 10 with many science-fiction books.
- The next FOBPL board meeting is on September 21.

Library Director report:

- Rebecca provided an update on the WCLS data breach: their email is working and phones are mostly back up. Patrons can now call WCLS branches. BPL sent notices to patrons affected by the data breach, changed PIN numbers, and notified local and state news media. The response was light – a few questions over the first few days. The WCLS investigation is ongoing.
- Sunday hours will resume on September 11 and will continue year-round.
- Library Connections at Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College, and Western Washington University will reopen in late September.
- The Library has been a part of many community events this summer. On August 19, for instance, we will participate in 3 community events on a single day: Goodwill Immigrant and Refugee Fair, Birchwood International Market, and Villa Santa Fe Back-to-School Event.
- Public Works submitted our Capital Budget Request for renovations at the Central Library approved at last month's Board meeting. Rebecca had a preliminary budget meeting with Brian Heinrich, Deputy Administrator Executive, Andy Asbjornsen, Finance Director, and Forrest Longman, Deputy Finance Director.
- Sarah Chaplin, Legal liaison for the library, will be out from late September until early January. City Attorney Alan Marriner will be standing in during her absence.
- Referring to the Communications infographic in the packet called *How Public Libraries Adapted to Serve Their Communities at the Start of the COVID-19 Pandemic*, Rebecca commented, that even though Washington State is not included in the data, it is interesting to see the national responses to the pandemic. Rick added that BPL provided all of the services listed.

Godfrey's Associates Facilities Master Plan presentation and discussion:

Rick provided preliminary comments to the presentation: the adopted Level of Service Standard (LOS) for facilities is: low, or minimal—0.6 sf per capita; medium, or operational—0.8 sf per capita; high, or optimal—1.0 sf per capita. City Council voted in November 2017 to move to medium or high level of service.

The Library Board approved funding to hire a consultant, and the selected firm was Godfrey's Associates. Rick noted that today's presentation will be a chance for Board members to review and provide direction on recommendations, and to provide input on the

presentation for the September 12 presentation to the City Council. He highlighted that this study will result in a report with findings and recommendations. Actual plans for the Library's future will be a dialogue between the city, the Library and the community with guidance from this report.

Brad Waters and Alex Lamis, Godfrey's Associates architects, shared a PowerPoint presentation (see *Attachment #1 for Bellingham Public Library Facilities Master Plan Preliminary Recommendations. All attachments are at the end of the minutes*). The presentation identified the methodology used and provided high-level recommendations for discussion and direction. The recommendations were grouped into three tiers: Near Term (5 years), Mid Term (10 years) and Long Term (20 years). Near term recommendations included: a Library presence on the north side, finish renovation of the Central Library, and plan for renovation of Fairhaven Library to make better use of the building. Mid term recommendations include exploring a larger space on the East side of the City and completing renovations at Fairhaven. Long Term recommendations include circling back to the Central Library and evaluating additional square footage needs.

Brad and Alex invited questions:

- Melissa questioned if the mall space was a long-term solution. Rick responded that funding for a 2-year trial was submitted as part of our 2023-2024 Operational Budget request. He added there is a clear need for a permanent spot – the mall may or may not be that spot. This trial would help determine future use and the size of facility needed.
- Melissa asked if, during the Facilities Master Plan process, there was input from the community about the green space between the library and city hall. Brad answered that there were a number of positive comments about the library space – that the library needs to be on this block. The green space is an amenity. The Japanese Garden space is being updated. Rebecca Judd clarified that what is often referred to as the library lawn is actually Park District property (Lee Memorial Park).
- Rebecca Craven asked about sequencing of future plans in relation to spending on the part of the public – is it feasible to spend money to upgrade the existing Central Library? At what point will it need to be replaced? Brad answered that, looking at a 20-year plan, \$8.5 million is a good investment for 5 or more years. But to meet the desired Level of Service (LOS) standard, square footage needs to increase – this could be done with branches.
- Rebecca Craven asked about the timeline for the final report. Rick answered that we are looking to wrap up at the end of this month. Godfrey's is scheduled to present to City Council on September 12.
- Leigh Ann, responding to possible changes for the Friends of the Library, requested more information. Rick responded that these are sketches of ideas, Godfrey's is not under contract for architectural plans. That would be the next phase. Brad added that the sketching process helps to quantify usability of square footage.
- Kristy asked what the purpose is for the City Council presentation – is it a request or a call to action? Rick answered that this isn't something Council will vote on, it is information only. What we have before Council now is our Capital Budget request for the Central upgrade and the Operational Budget request for the mall trial project. Jim added that this is similar to the endorsement we received to increase our LOS standards – support for a future path.

- Brad asked what part of the presentation was impactful, adding suggestions and comments will help craft the final report and Council presentation.
- Kristy suggested a good summary and making it clear we are not asking for all of this right now – that we are planning for the future. Rick agreed that we want to engage in a conversation over time, to get ideas of how we can get there.
- Rebecca Craven said the slide that shows square footage needs over time is helpful and suggested attaching square footage numbers to the slides. We are targeting the Facilities LOS, so it would be good to see how the numbers add up. Jim said to keep in mind that all of the currently unused space in the libraries is already included in our square footage, so upgrading won't increase square footage, but it will be more functional space.
- Rick encouraged everyone to get their ideas and thoughts to Rebecca or himself and he thanked Brad and Alex for their presentation.

Policy review: Internet Policy:

Rebecca screenshared the Draft Internet Policy that is included in the packet. Jon explained we are proposing a small change to the language in the policy. Since reopening after the pandemic, the computers are not getting the same level of use. Staff requested we increase the amount of time patrons can use the computers. Previously, the computers were used 60% of the time; last year, analysis showed this dropped to about 25% (some of this due to social distancing requiring blocking off some computers). This year, the use is around 22%. We don't think it is necessary to limit patrons to only 90 minutes, but we do want to continue with some limit. The new wording in the policy gives more management flexibility. Item 6 would read, "In order to make the Library's computers available to as many persons as possible, the Library Director or designee may set limits on the time allowed per patron for use of the Library's public access computers and may choose how to implement the limits."

Rick pointed out that this seems to be a procedural change rather than policy, but it is in the policy. It makes sense to allow the flexibility to change as needed. Jim agreed that this should serve for the future, not having a fixed limit and being able to apply limits as needed.

Rebecca Craven moved that the policy should be approved as written. Jim McCabe seconded. Motion carried.

New Business:

- New Department Heads as guests; to be arranged by Rebecca Judd and Wendy.
- Jim requested guidance on the best way to participate in the City Council presentation. Rebecca said we need to decide who will be panelists and provide meeting invites.

Action items for next meeting: Land Acknowledgement

Meeting adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – Tuesday, Sept. 20 2022 – Zoom meeting – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Attachments:

- Attachment #1: Bellingham Public Library Facilities Master Plan Preliminary Recommendations



Bellingham

Public Library Facilities Master Plan

Preliminary Recommendations

Godfrey's Associates Library Planners & Consultants

We are an international
library practice:

- Nationwide expertise
- Extensive experience
with public library
systems
- Efficient facilities help
control operational
costs



Otis College Library, Los Angeles, California



Master Plan Methodology

Godfrey's used quantitative & qualitative research to inform our data-driven findings, conclusions & 20-year recommendations

- Multiple community engagement forums
- Peer Library, demographics & industry trends analysis
- Existing conditions assessment
- LOS Standards compliance



Community Input

Over 1,000 participants:

- 18 stakeholder interviews
- 13 focus groups with 58 total participants
- 980 online survey responses

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Cedar Rapids Public Library, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Peer Library Facilities

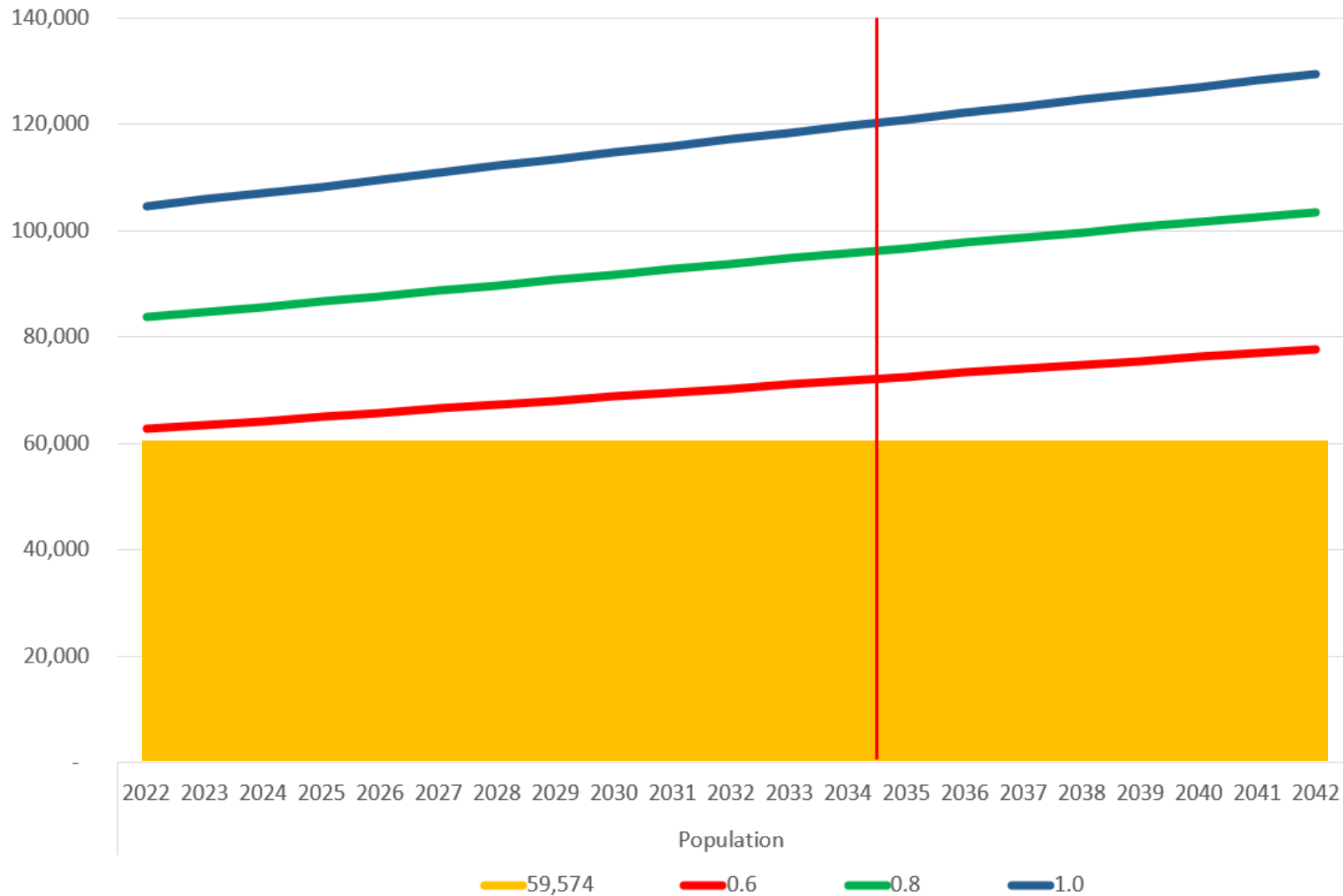
Bellingham was compared with 29 Peer library systems pre-Covid (2019):

- BPL's adopted LOS minimum standard of 0.60 square feet (SF) per capita is consistent nationally
- 0.58 SF per capita was the Peer average



Billings Public Library, Billings, Montana

Future Population vs. Square Footage 2022-2042



Gaps in square footage (SF) are based on future UGA population:

- 2022 SF per capita = 0.54
- 2034-2035 space need is double the current SF

Current Facilities

In addition to being outdated and/or small, existing Bellingham Public Libraries do not have:

- Modern infrastructure adaptable to current & future needs
- Flexible space
- Energy efficiency to help combat climate change



Success Public Library, Cockburn, Australia

Purpose-Built Library Buildings = Sustainability

Operational efficiency = staff efficient

- Customer self-service, automation & ease of supervision
- 75-year building lifespan via open multi-use spaces, adaptable to change & expandable
- Net-zero energy consumption via reduced demand & on-site generation

Technology

Capital improvements:

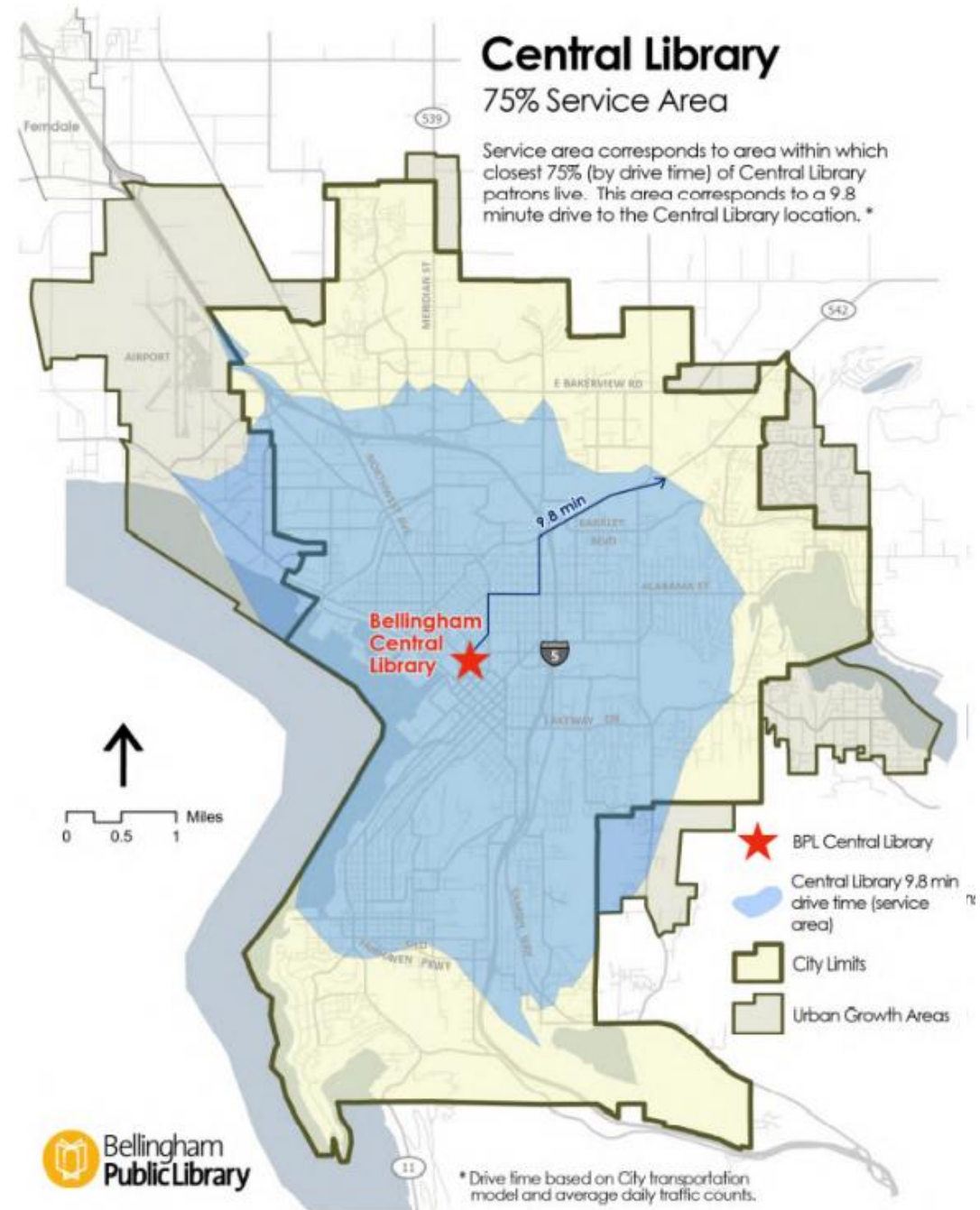
- RFID/self-check-out/automated sorting
- Lending laptops/tablets & hotspots
- 24/7 unstaffed operations: lending lockers, computer access

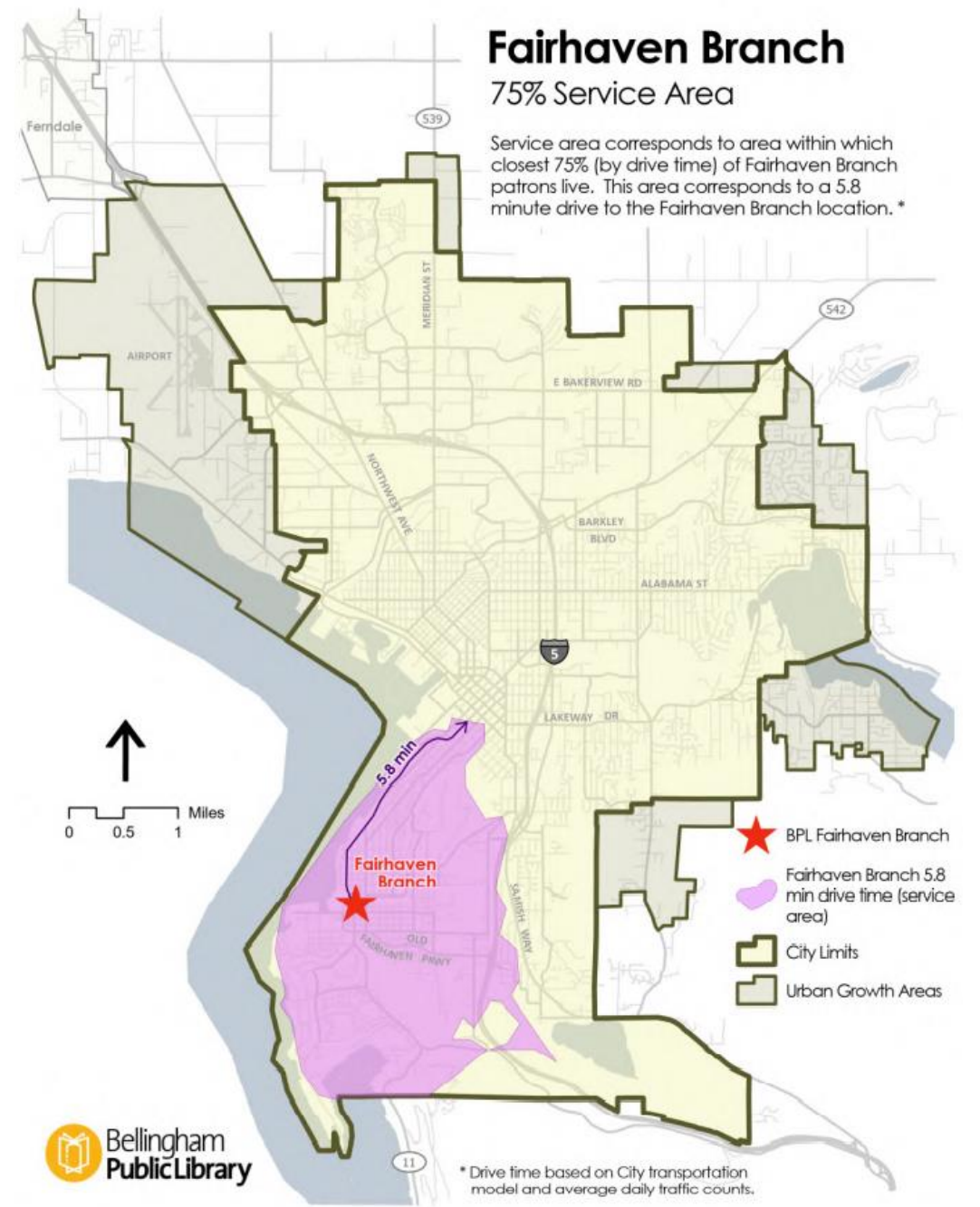
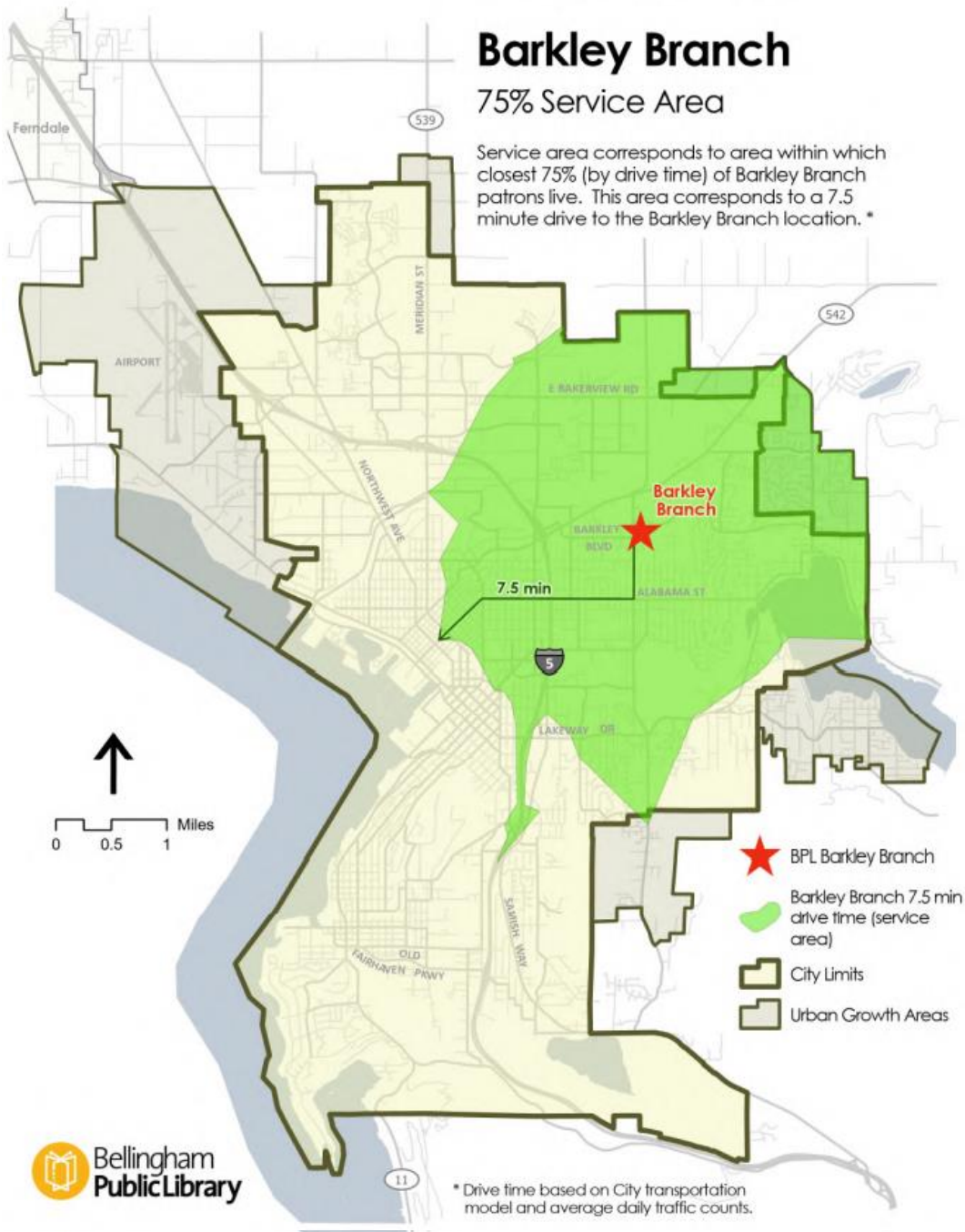


Accessibility

Closing other gaps in service:

- Geographic coverage
- Underserved & unserved communities
- All while reducing carbon footprint





Near-Term Priorities

Preliminary 5-year goals:

1. Renovate the remaining 2 floors of the Central Library
2. Establish a northern presence at Bellis Fair Mall, then a new Branch Library
3. Rehabilitate Fairhaven Branch Library

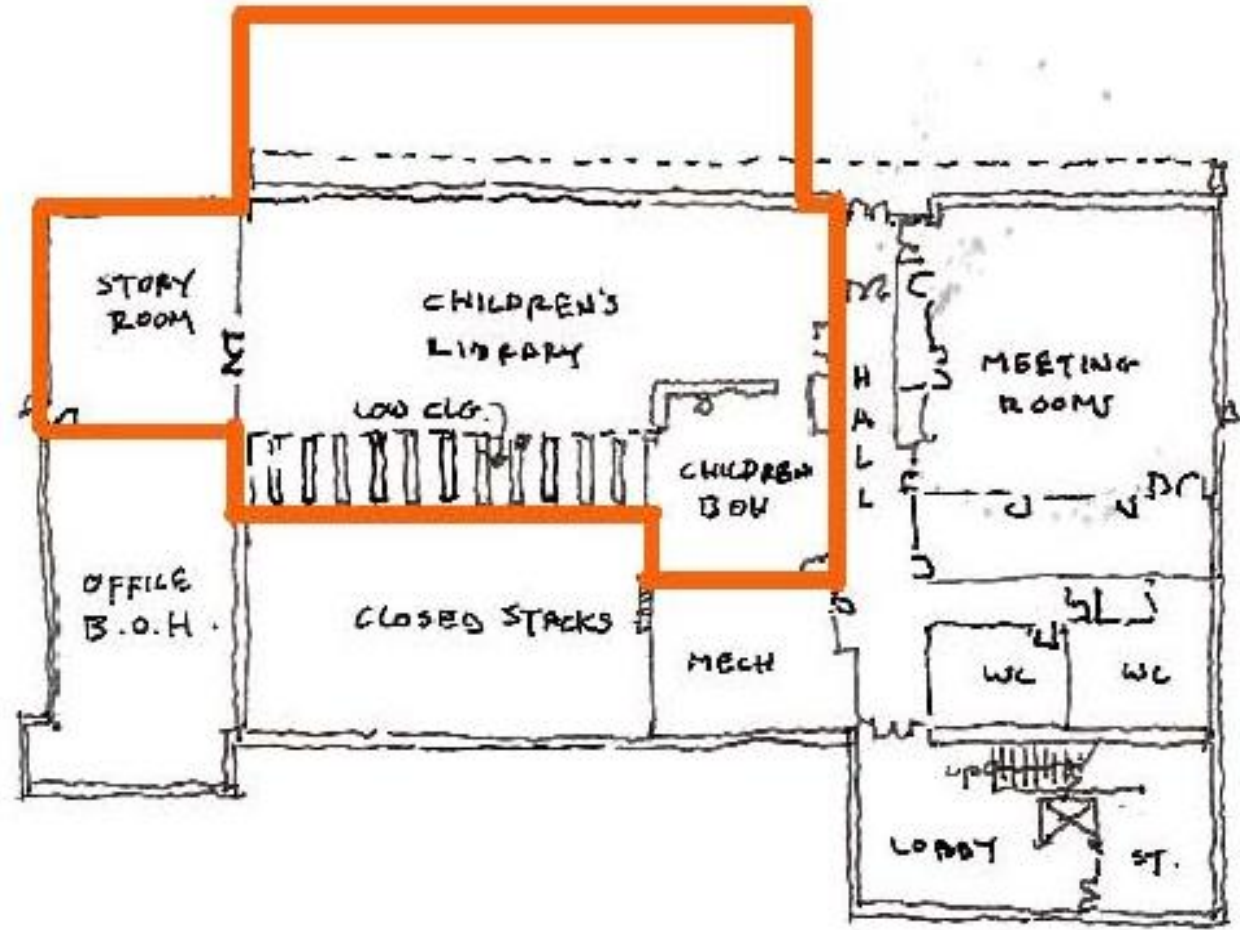


Chapel Hill Public Library, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Central Library

Near-term renovation:

1. Continue improvements for the lower & upper floors
2. Limit interior space usage for public service to 2 floors
3. \$8.5 million capital request in place

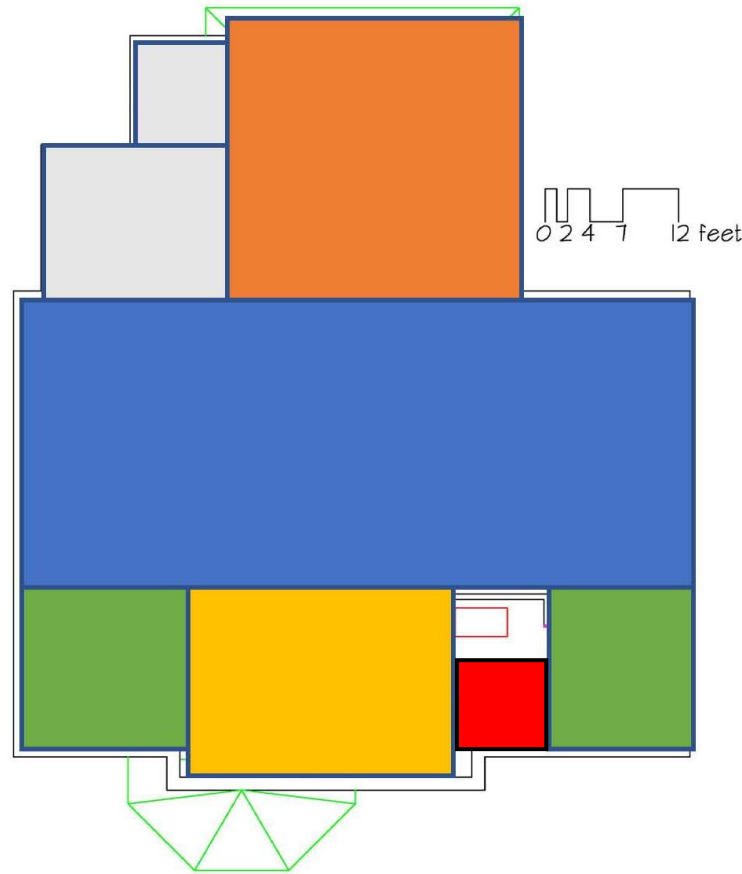


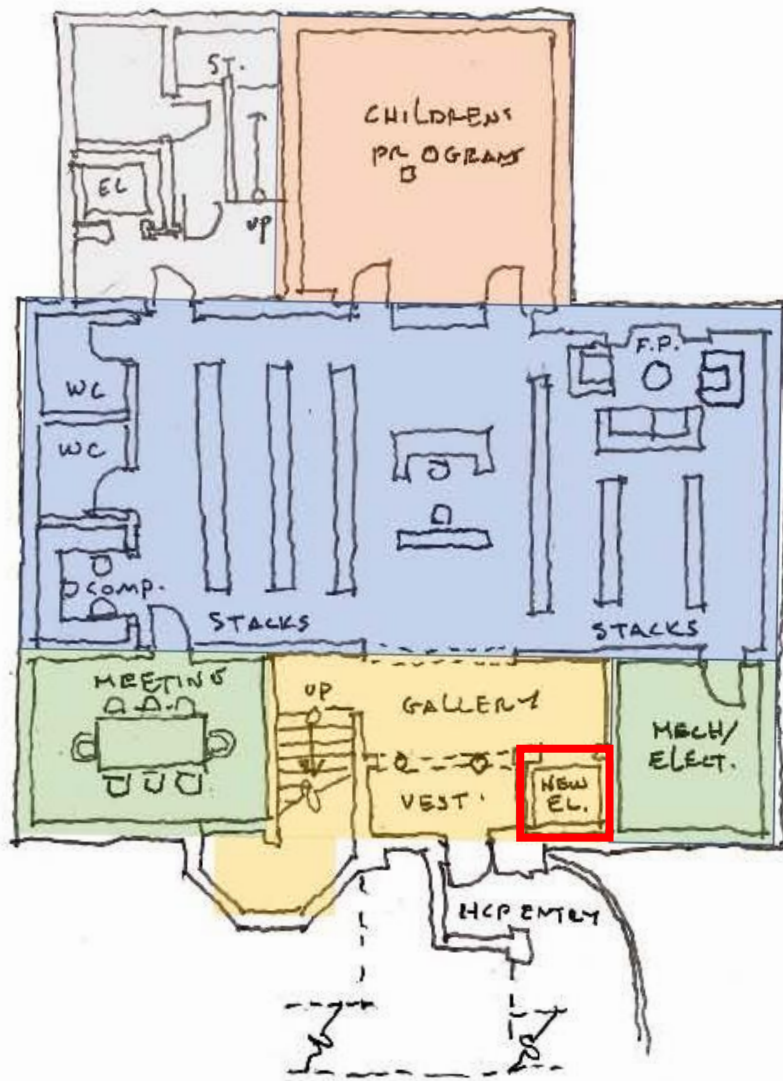
EXISTING LOWER LEVEL

Fairhaven Library

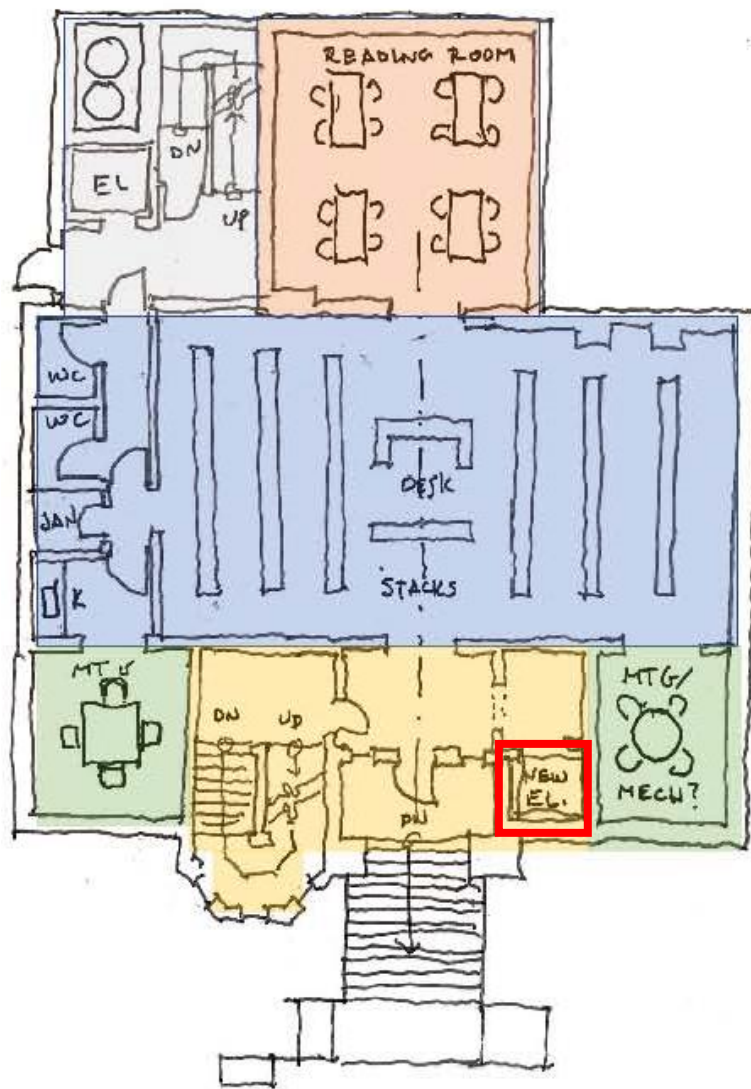
Near-term historic rehabilitation:

1. Preserve exterior building fabric
2. Improve interior space usage for public service
3. Pursue multiple resources available for capital improvements of historic properties

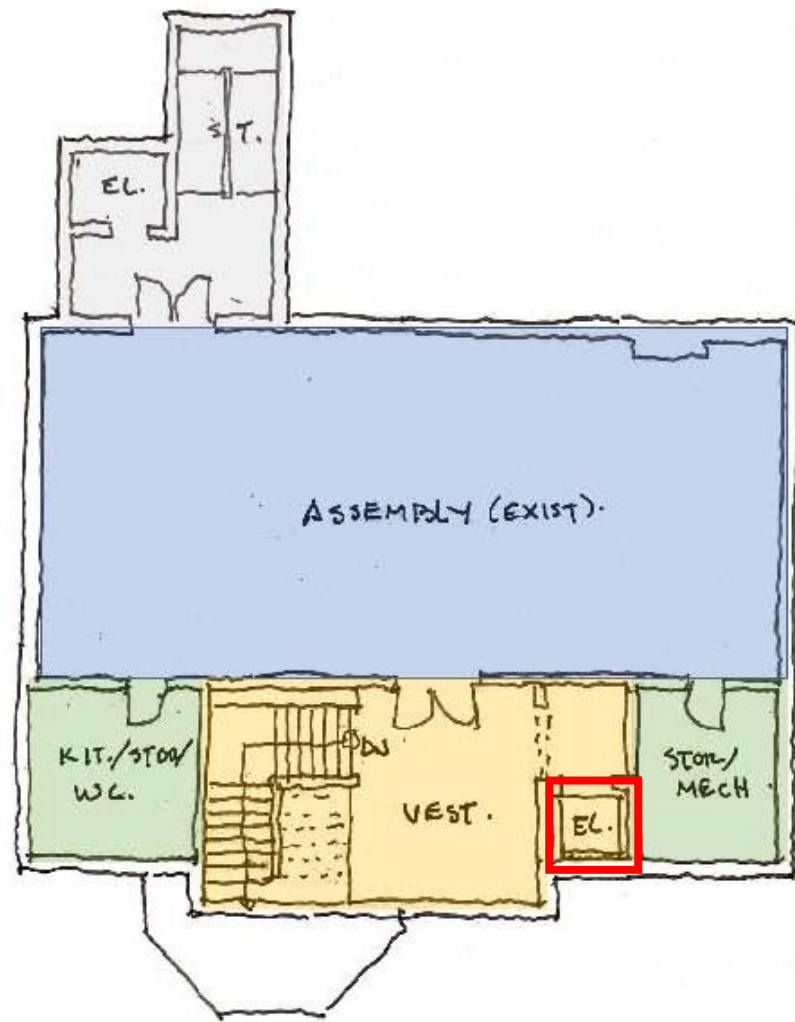




FAIRHAVEN BRANCH
LOWER LEVEL
7.5.22 REV 1



FAIRHAVEN BRANCH
MAIN LEVEL
7.5.22 REV 1



FAIRHAVEN BRANCH
UPPER LEVEL
7.5.22



Mid-Term Priorities

Preliminary 10-year goals:

1. Increase Library space to 0.8 SF per capita by 2032
2. Increase library space on the East side, possibly replacing the current Barkley Library



Long-Term Priorities

Preliminary 20-year goals:

1. Increase Library space to 1.0 SF per capita by 2042
2. Construct a new Central Library on the current block
3. Consider possible expansion of Branch Libraries for SF to reach or exceed the goal

Potential mixed-use: Library & affordable housing



Taylor Street Apartments & Little Italy Branch Library, Chicago Public Library, Chicago, Illinois



Little Italy Branch of the Chicago Public Library, Chicago, Illinois

The future belongs to those who plan for it!

