

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.

**Central Library, 210 Central Avenue, Bellingham, Washington
Lecture Room – 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.

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| 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: February 18, 2025: Regular Board Meeting• Library performance & activity measures: February 2025• Financial reports
Claims: February 2025
YTD report: February 2025 | 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. 2025 Board Committees - Discussion | 15 min |
| • Rebecca Craven, Board Chair | |
| 7. Statistical Trends: Inputs and Outputs through 2024 | 20 min |
| • Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services | |
| | Time check: 4:20 |
| 8. Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update | 15 min |
| • Rebecca Judd, Director | |
| • Safety Issues Summary (see packet materials) - Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations | |
| 9. Budget Planning update | 5 min |
| • Rebecca Judd, Director | |
| 10. Central Library Renovation update | 10 min |
| • Lee Memorial Park update - Rebecca Judd, Director | |
| • WCF Letter of Agreement update - Rebecca Judd, Director | |
| | Time check: 4:50 |
| 11. Library Giving Day and National Library Week update | 5 min |
| • Rebecca Judd, Director and Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations | |
| 12. New business | 3 min |
| 13. Agenda items for next meeting | 2 min |
| | Time check: 5:00 |
| 14. 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, April 15, 2025 – 3:30 p.m.
Location: Lecture Room, Central Library, 210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, Washington**

https://www.thecentersquare.com/washington/article_b0eff58a-f552-11ef-bef3-bb2c841ed5f0.html

Levy helps to fund Seattle Public Library's massive e-circulation collection

By Spencer Pauley | The Center Square
Feb 27, 2025

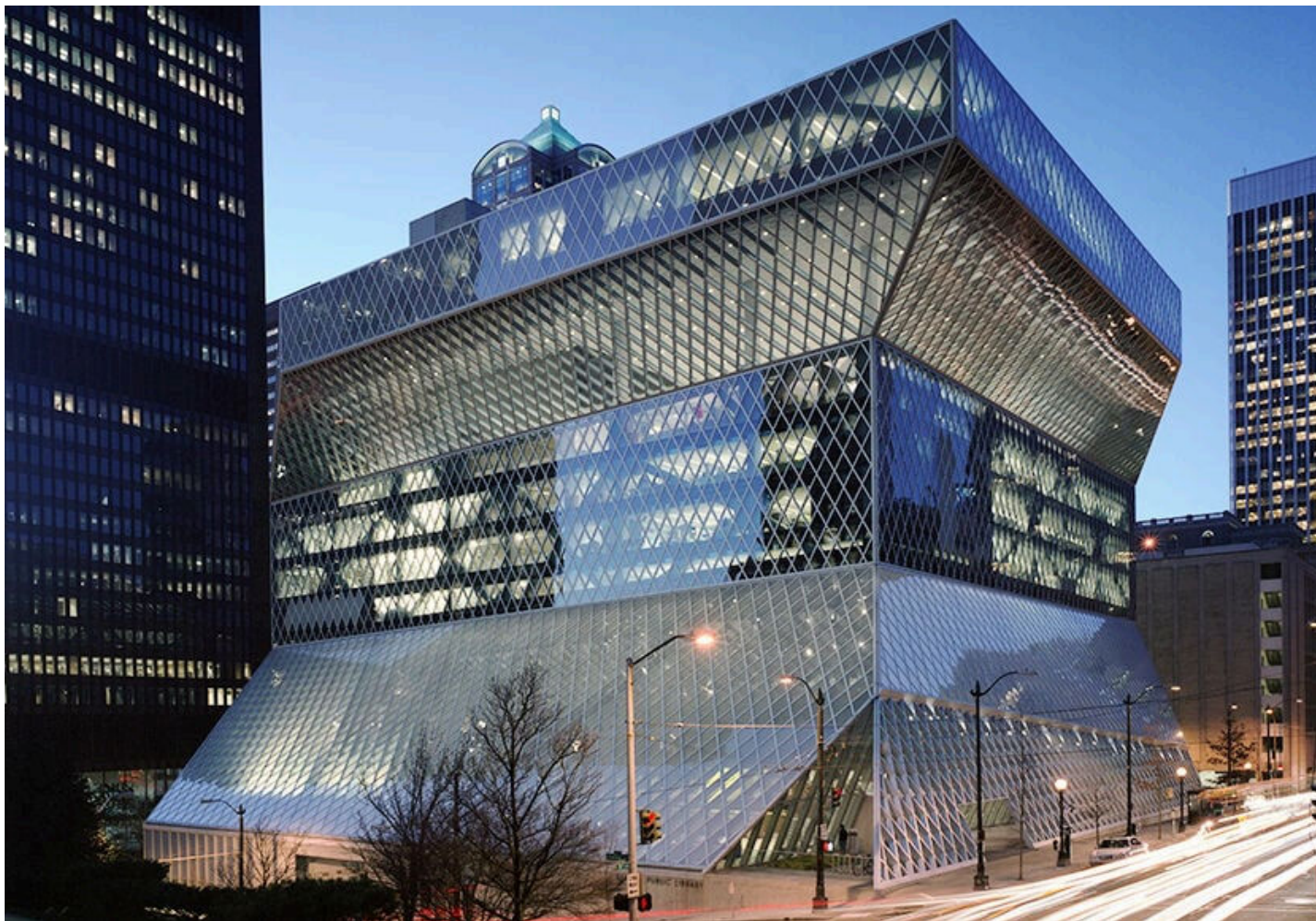


Photo courtesy of the Seattle Public Library

(The Center Square) – Tax dollars helped the Seattle Public Library garner more books, e-books and audio books last year, making it one of the largest such collections in the nation.

In August 2019, Seattle voters overwhelmingly approved a seven-year, \$219.1 million property tax levy to maintain and enhance Library services from 2020 through 2026. That vote renewed the seven-year levy approved in 2012.

Generated revenue specifically funds collections, children's programs, technology and online services, and building maintenance.

The levy rate was originally proposed at 12 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, but changes throughout its seven-year span to collect the set amount of \$219.1 million. The average Seattle homeowner pays approximately \$8 a year toward the levy.

Seattle Chief Librarian Tom Fay provided the Seattle Libraries, Education, and Neighborhoods Committee with an **update** Thursday on the levy's impact.

According to Fay, the levy provided \$50.3 million, or 36.4%, of the library's 2024 budget. The city's general fund provides \$87.7 million, or 63.4%, of the total \$138.4 million dedicated to the library system.

Over 40% of the levy funds hours of service, nearly 20% funds collections, about 17% goes toward building maintenance, and 9% to 10% goes to technology.

The levy also funds 25% of all staffing positions within the library.

The Seattle Public Library now has one of the largest e-circulation libraries in the world. Since 2019, e-book and audio book checkouts have grown by 160% from 3.4 million in 2019 to 5.4 million in 2024.

Fay has high hopes for the library to continue expanding its digital collection, but notes that would require more money.

"I really want us to have the largest e-book and e-audio collection in the country, if not the world," Fay said during the **committee meeting**. "It will require considerable funding."

The library also added over 168,000 items to its physical collection in 2024. Fay believes the library is “probably close” to being at maximum levels of physical books.

In total, the library’s digital and physical collection now contains 2.9 million items, according to Fay.

Last year, the library was able to reopen its Green Lake branch after a seismic retrofit and remodel to improve building safety. This project was 65% funded by levy funds.

However, maintenance of the library network will continue to be a need through 2045.

“Over the next 20 years, we anticipate somewhere between \$100 million to \$150 million of basic building maintenance needs to occur,” Fay said.

The estimated cost does not include major improvements such as seismic retrofit projects.

In May 2024, the Seattle Public Library was hit by a cyber attack that impacted its website, Wi-Fi, online catalog and loaning system. It took several months for services to return for users of the library.

Fay reported to the committee that the library has since improved its cybersecurity by moving systems to the cloud, implementing multi-factor authentication, and hiring a new cybersecurity analyst.

Two levy-funded technology initiatives are set to progress more in 2025: a new library app and a replacement of the integrated library system.

The integrated library system helps manage books, checkouts and patron accounts.

“Our current system is outdated by a great number of years and limits what we can do for our patron experience,” Fay said.

The first phase of the new system is expected to be completed around mid-2026.

Spencer Pauley

Staff Reporter

CONNECT with Bellingham Public Library



Summer Reading Returns

June 1 – August 31, 2025

Activity cards will be available for early learners, kids, teens and adults in English, Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese to pick up at any Bellingham Public Library location or print at home. Fill out the activity cards and return them to the Library by August 31 for prizes and Summer Reading Superstar yard and window signs.

Library Card Night @ Bellingham Bells Game

Thursday, June 26

5:30 p.m. gates open, 6:35 p.m. first pitch

Joe Martin Field

Kick off Summer Reading with a Library party at the ballpark! Show your library card at the Bellingham Bells gate on June 26 for one free general admission ticket to the home game that night. One ticket per library card.



BellinghamPublicLibrary.org

SUMMER STORYTIMES

Little Storytime @ Central Library

Tuesdays, July 8 – August 5
10:05-10:35, 10:35-11:05, and 11:05-11:35 a.m.

For children ages birth – 3 with an adult partner. Join us for simple stories, songs, fingerplays, and movement. Lots of fun!

Little Storytime @ Bellis Fair Library

Wednesdays, July 9 – August 6
10:05-10:35 a.m., 10:45-11:15 a.m., and 11:25-11:55 a.m.

For children ages birth – 3 with adult partner. Join us for simple stories, songs, fingerplays, and movement. Lots of fun. Note: If entering the mall before 11 a.m., use the entrance next to Target or the Food Court entrance.

Preschool Storytime @ Bellis Fair Library

Wednesdays, July 9 – August 6
12:05-12:35 p.m.

For children ages 3 – 5 with an adult partner. Join us for fun and engaging stories, songs, fingerplays, and a simple craft.

Baby Time @ Central Library**

Mondays, July 7 – August 11; 10:30-11:30 a.m.

For babies ages birth – 12 months with an adult partner. Songs, rhymes, bounces, movement, and stories! **Pre-registration is required! Call 360-778-7200 or email Bernice at bchang@cob.org for registration information. Note: you are registering for all 6 weeks.

Library Explorers @ Central Library

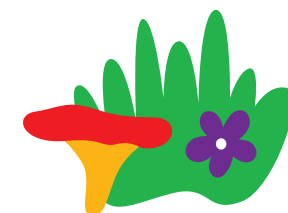
Thursdays, July 10 – August 7
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

For ages 6 – 10 with families welcome. Explore the world and wonders of the library through fun stories, experiments, crafts and more.

Stories and Play @ Central Library

Fridays, July 11 – August 8 (not July 25)
10:05-11:05 a.m., 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

For children ages 3 – 5. This is a storytime and facilitated play experience for young children and the adults who take care of them. Come enjoy stories, songs, play and activities.



Summer Craft Fairs

Pre-registration is required for sellers. Sign up on the Library website beginning June 1.

Children's Craft Fair

Friday, July 25

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Lee Memorial Park (Library lawn)

Come and enjoy a wide array of handmade crafts and baked goods created by children 13 and under. All items are priced \$5 or less; cash only sales. Fun for all ages to browse!

Children's Craft Fair in the Bellis Fair Mall

Friday, August 22, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Inside the Bellis Fair Mall

Come and enjoy a wide array of handmade crafts and baked goods created by children 13 and under. All items are priced \$5 or less; cash only sales. Fun for all ages to browse!





**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, February 18, 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, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Madeline Rosenvinge
FOBPL Representative: Carol Comeau, Friends of BPL Board Liaison
Guest Presenter: Jenn Daly, Marcus Warolin, and Brad Tuininga from Whatcom Community Foundation

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:32 p.m. by Chair, Rebecca Craven.

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

Public comment: None

Consent agenda: Kendra Bradford moved to approve the January 21, 2025 Regular Meeting minutes and the January 2025 Performance and Activity measures and financial reports. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.

- Madeline Rosenvinge will investigate whether we can remove Fairhaven Auditorium fees from the Library budget since that is managed by the Parks Department now.

Board Chair report:

- Rebecca Craven submitted her first newsletter article to the Friends and had her first meeting with the Mayor last week. She enjoyed these meetings and the chance to build relationships.

Board member reports:

- None

City Council liaison report:

- While the State is in the midst of a legislative session, Hannah Stone wanted to express appreciation for our partnership and all the work Rebecca Judd is doing to keep library needs at the forefront of the conversation. It is a busy time, but the City is making a lot of progress despite the changing political climate and budget constraints.

Friends of BPL report:

- The next Friends annual meeting will be April 19, from 10am-12pm. Katie Bray will give a book talk, and Pat Holden from Public Works will speak about emergency preparedness. At the March FOBPL board meeting, the board will discuss how much funding they can commit to the Library renovation project.

Library Director report:

- Mayor Kim Lund communicated to all City staff procedures to follow if ICE enters a City facility.. ICE officers are not allowed in staff areas but are allowed in public spaces. Staff are advised to call the Mayor and the City attorney in the event that ICE officers appear. Rebecca Judd asked that Library staff call Rebecca as well.
- Library Legislative Day was held on February 5, and Rebecca Judd was able to meet with Rep. Joe Timmons, Rep. Alicia Rule, and Sen. Shewmake's legislative aide to talk about the Central Library interior renovation, and the request for \$1M in Local & Community Project funds. Following, Legislative Day, Rebecca met with Library Directors from across the state for a 2-day retreat in Tumwater. Budgets were a major topic at the retreat, especially proposed reductions to the WA State Library.
- Whatcom County Library System Trustees will be voting soon on a proposal to put a levy lid lift on the August 2025 ballot. If approved, Executive Director Christine Perkins would like to attend a BPL Board meeting to discuss the proposal. Rebecca will be reaching out to the State Library about the possibility of a regional retreat for Library Trustees which would allow an opportunity to meet with WCLS Trustees, as well as other Trustees from neighboring Counties.
- Kendra Bradford asked for a definition of "meeting in a bag" on page 32 of the packet. Jon McConnel responded that it was an initiative of the City's Planning Department and intended to be a way for people to give feedback on the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Department team put together a tote bag with all the equipment needed to do the Comp Plan exercise and asked if the Library could circulate the kits to community members. Jon explained this was a good example of the One City endeavor.
- Rebecca Craven asked for an explanation of the One City concept. Rebecca Judd responded that Mayor Lund brought this vision to the City. Instead of each department working in silos separate from each other, we are all One City working together. With this in mind, we had a One City all-staff meeting in January for City employees to come together as a more unified City government.

Open Public Meetings Act and Public Records Act:

- Madeline Rosenvinge provided an overview of these laws and their requirements: “The Washington Open Public Meetings Act, codified in chapter 42.30 RCW, requires that all meetings of governing bodies of public agencies, including cities, counties, and special purpose district, be open to the public. The Public Records Act (PRA) is a law of the U.S. state of Washington requiring public access to all records and materials from state and local agencies.”

Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update

- Rebecca Judd had an opportunity to contribute to a Bellingham Herald article about winter shelter, and to communicate the urgent need for daytime shelter in our community for those experiencing homelessness. We have felt the lack of daytime shelters acutely this winter, and the level of sheltering at the library is unsustainable.
 - Kristy Van Ness noted that the Herald article was well-rounded and the other articles in the packet were helpful in showing a wider range of thoughts on the issue.
 - Kendra Bradford asked whether there were more daytime sheltering options in the past and what has changed this year. Rebecca Judd explained that in the past, Lighthouse Mission allowed more people to stay at their facility during the day, but that daytime use is now restricted. On the coldest days of the winter, Lighthouse Mission did allow daytime use and the impact on the Library's public space was immediate. Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services, noted that it was the first Sunday with no incident reports since she started working here. Annette Bagley, Jon McConnel, and Katrina Buckman are pulling together data about incident reports on days when there are other shelter options.
 - Carol Comeau mentioned that when she dropped a book off on Monday when the Library was closed, it was raining hard and a lot of people were camped out in front of the Library. This reinforced to her how much of a resource the library is and that it can't continue being the only place for people to go.
 - Hannah Stone noted that Whatcom County Health and Community Services is tasked with providing care for the community during severe weather events. This winter, County staff stepped in to help, often going into overtime. Finding providers to support operations is the biggest challenge everyone is facing.

Budget Planning Update

- No notes

Central Library Renovation Update

- No notes

2025 WCF Disbursement

- Whatcom Community Foundation 2025 annual distribution: Deborra Garrett made a motion that the 2025 annual designated distribution from the Bayview Fund, the Designated Endowment Fund, and the Dorothy and Harris Gonsalves Bellingham Public Library

Endowment Fund be deposited into the Bellingham Public Library's Gift Fund. Kendra Bradford seconded. Motion carried.

- Deborra Garrett made a motion to put the 2025 Muldrow-Bragg distribution into the spendable account at WCF. Kristy seconded, motion passed.

2025 Funding Presentation

- Jenn Daly, Marcus Warolin, and Brad Tuininga from the Whatcom Community Foundation came to discuss a fundraising plan for the Library's capital improvement project. After a review of the fundraising plan numbers (*see Attachment #1 for Bellingham Public Library – Capital Fundraising Effort Tracking handout*), and after Board discussion, Kristy Van Ness made a motion to authorize the Library Board of Trustees to borrow against the earnings of the Bragg-Muldrow endowment to support the Central Library's interior renovation. Specifically, the Board requested that WCF facilitate this by transferring \$1,589,093 (or the current value) from the endowment's earnings account into a short-term investment account, ensuring funds are available for project-related expenses if/when needed. Additionally, the Board requested that WCF prepare the necessary documents to formalize this borrowing arrangement, with the explicit understanding that any disbursed funds will be repaid through future fundraising efforts or by reinvesting annual disbursements until the full amount is restored to the earnings account. The BPL Board authorized the Board Chair to sign these documents once they have been prepared and approved by the WCF Board. Kendra Bradford seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Board Committees Discussion

- Postponed until next month

New Business:

- None

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Board committee discussion

Meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting Tuesday, March 18, 2025 – Central Library Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Bellingham Public Library - Capital Fundraising Effort Tracking

Sources	Funds in Hand	Funds Committed	Funds Estimated	2025 Fundraising Goal	2026 Fundraising Goal	Notes
BPL 2024 Commitment (\$1M)						
Spendable in Bragg/Muldraw Endowment as of 12/31/24	\$657,176					Bragg/Muldraw spendable as of 12/31/2024 when the BOT committed these funds to the capital effort.
Funds BPL has on hand committed to capital in 2024	\$342,824					unrestricted funds raised and on-hand in 2024 when the BOT committed these funds to the capital effort.
Follis Estate Gift						
	\$100,000					
Friends of Bellingham Public Library						
Capital Pledge			\$250,000			Conversations ongoing. Decision expected 3/2025
\$5,000 Match for Library Giving Day		\$5,000				
Individual Major Gifts						
Celedo Fund (WCF)		\$100,000				
Major Gift (WCF)	\$15,000					
Major Gift (WCF)	\$5,000					
Other, to be identified				\$600,000	\$400,000	
Grants						
Jerry H. Walton Family Foundation	\$10,000					
Norcliffe Foundation				\$350,000		max capital request is 10% of fundraising goal
Public Fundraising Efforts (BPL)						
2025 Public Fundraising Campaign				\$105,000		
2026 Public Fundraising Campaign					\$125,000	
Other						
Bragg/Muldraw Endowment Earnings						
2025 Bragg/Muldraw Endowment Spendable		\$239,627				Applied to spendable in January 2025, not included in BPL 2024 commitment
2026 Bragg/Muldraw Endowment Spendable			\$200,000			Conservative estimate based on historic average of a 4% spending rate and fund balance of \$5M

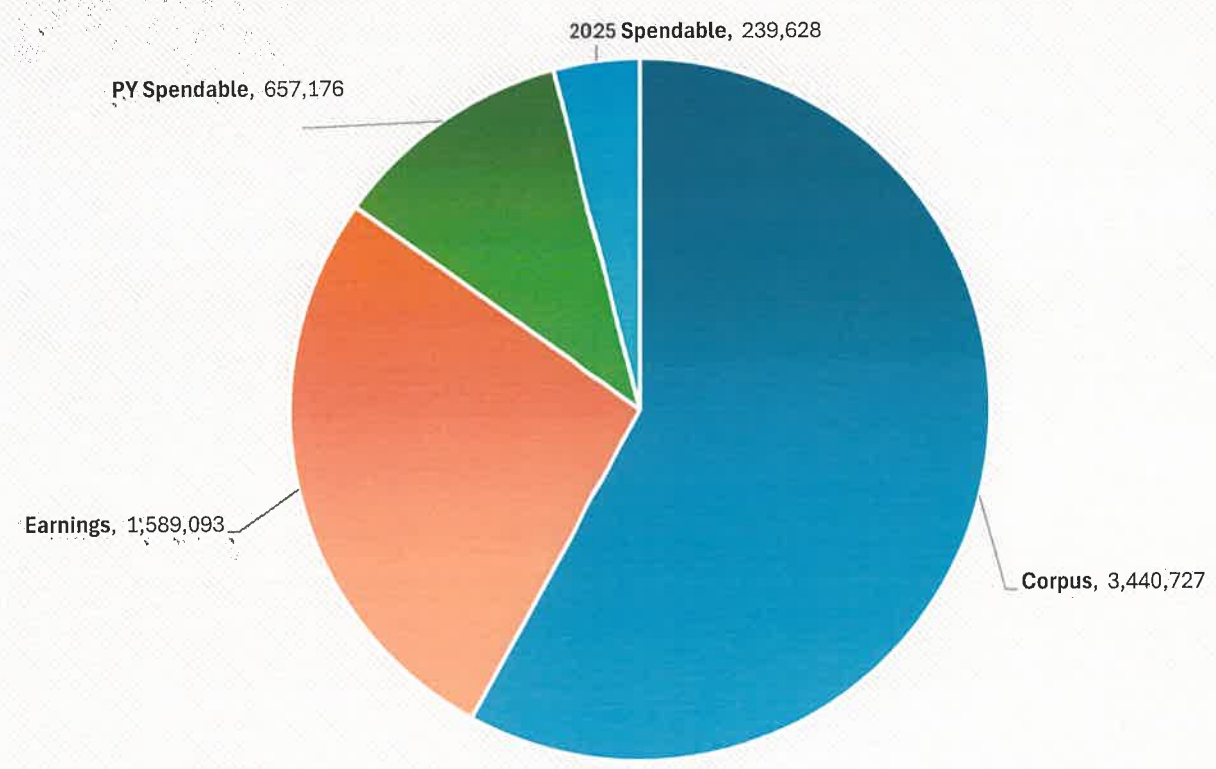
Total Funds Identified:	\$1,130,000	\$344,627	\$450,000		
2025/2026 Fundraising Goals:				\$1,055,000	\$525,000
Philanthropic Fundraising Goal:	\$3,500,000				

TOTALS
\$1,924,627
\$1,580,000
\$3,500,000

	1/31/2025
Corpus	3,440,727
Earnings	1,589,093
PY Spendable	657,176
2025 Spendable	239,628

Spendable taken on : 1/1/2026
Loan taken on 1/1/2026
What would be 1/1/26 spendable estimate
estimated loan of \$1M

The Robert Bragg & George Muldrow Endowment for BPL



Bellingham Public Library - Performance & Activity Measures, February 2025

	February		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	1,567	1,998	3,454	3,885	-11.09%
Electronic copies purchased by BPL	207	88	303	184	64.67%
Physical copies withdrawn from collection	(4,741)	(488)	(5,133)	(881)	482.63%
Total physical holdings			182,999	180,115	1.60%
Total electronic holdings available to BPL			166,139	153,611	8.16%
Total Holdings (Physical and Electronic)			349,138	333,726	4.62%
Circulation - Number of items checked out or renewed; includes Interlibrary Loan and Outreach activity					
Central Library					
Adult	36,161	41,240	77,517	80,342	-3.52%
Youth	37,588	40,533	78,392	77,041	1.75%
Sub-Total Central	73,749	81,773	155,909	157,383	-0.94%
Fairhaven Branch					
Adult	4,642	4,783	9,511	9,515	-0.04%
Youth	2,655	2,345	5,169	4,539	13.88%
Sub-Total Fairhaven	7,297	7,128	14,680	14,054	4.45%
Barkley Branch					
Adult	4,469	4,767	9,279	9,300	-0.23%
Youth	4,680	3,873	9,434	7,729	22.06%
Sub-Total Barkley	9,149	8,640	18,713	17,029	9.89%
Bellis Fair Branch					
Adult	1,303	1,258	2,654	2,275	16.66%
Youth	2,006	1,918	3,995	3,470	15.13%
Sub-Total Bellis Fair	3,309	3,176	6,649	5,745	15.74%
Bellingham Technical College					
Adult	52	45	87	45	93.33%
Youth	3	13	7	15	-53.33%
Sub-Total BTC	55	58	94	60	56.67%
Whatcom Community College					
Adult	181	165	369	312	18.27%
Youth	28	14	43	31	38.71%
Sub-Total WCC	209	179	412	343	20.12%
Western Washington University					
Adult	312	190	586	349	67.91%
Youth	66	95	155	164	-5.49%
Sub-Total WWU	378	285	741	513	44.44%
Sub-Total Physical	94,146	101,239	197,198	195,127	1.06%
Online Services					
Kanopy	2,044	1,990	4,061	4,204	-3.40%
NW Anytime Library Overdrive	38,726	39,548	81,935	82,227	-0.36%
Overdrive Magazines	7,379	7,299	15,114	15,070	0.29%
Sub-Total Online	48,149	48,837	101,110	101,501	-0.39%
Total Circulation	142,295	150,076	298,308	296,628	0.57%
Holdings Activity					
Items pulled to fill holds	48,278	52,177	104,289	108,321	-3.72%
Services					
Persons Visiting - Number of persons counted as they enter the libraries					
Central Library	29,078	28,666	64,921	56,674	14.55%
Fairhaven Branch	3,201	3,134	6,491	5,984	8.47%
Barkley Branch	2,358	2,555	5,160	5,164	-0.08%
Bellis Fair Branch	2,164	2,393	4,491	4,620	-2.79%
Total Persons Visiting	36,801	36,748	76,572	67,822	12.90%
Website Visits					
This count reflects number of visits to www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org	41,774	42,904	84,270	89,849	-6.21%
Bibliocommons Visits					
This count reflects number of visits to Bibliocommons	23,388	25,132	49,726	53,311	-6.72%
Total Website Visits	65,162	68,036	133,996	143,160	-6.40%
Computer Usage - Number of sessions					
Central Library					
Adult & Teen (30 terminals)	3,238	3,070	7,126	6,071	17.38%
Childrens (3 terminals)	90	87	172	143	20.28%
Fairhaven Branch (7 terminals)	223	245	435	446	-2.47%
Barkley Branch (4 terminals)	111	174	255	336	-24.11%
Bellis Fair Branch (4 terminals)	107	154	240	270	-11.11%
Total Computer Usage	3,769	3,730	8,228	7,266	13.24%
New Borrowers Registered					
Central Library	541	621	1,312	1,399	-6.22%
Fairhaven Branch	33	28	80	60	33.33%
Barkley Branch	23	17	64	49	30.61%
Bellis Fair Branch	43	73	108	133	-18.80%
Total New Borrowers Registered	640	739	1,564	1,641	-4.69%
Programs - Library sponsored or co-sponsored educational, recreational, or cultural programs					
Programs	133	108	218	183	19.13%
Attendees	2,140	2,339	4,264	3,974	7.30%
Volunteer Hours	190	340	996	1,250	-20.29%

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

FEBRUARY 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 March 18, 2025, IN ACCORDANCE WITH RCW 27.12.210 AND 27.12.240.

	VENDOR	AMOUNT
Materials, Equipment and Supplies		
Books; DVDs; supplies; child masks	Amazon	1,298.68
Books	Baker & Taylor	24,427.78
Trustee name plate	Bay Trophies	25.07
Periodicals	Black Book Data	361.82
Books	Cavendish Square Books	186.03
Books	Center Point Large Print	97.08
Water (Barkley & Bellis Fair Branches)	Clearwater	52.23
Periodicals	Consumer Reports	106.82
DVDs, CDs, recorded books	Midwest Tape	1,787.71
Vehicle fuel	Nelson-Reisner Distributor	227.37
Office supplies	ODP Business Solutions	253.74
Finance Fees	Quadient	1,276.56
Interlibrary loan supplies	ULINE Shipping Supplies	319.53
	Materials, Equipment & Supplies Sub Total	\$30,420.42
 Services and Interfund Charges		
Barkley Branch cleaning	Action Cleaning	722.11
Creative Cloud	Adobe Inc	457.67
Bellis Fair Branch cleaning	Advantage Building Services	1,477.66
Hotspot service	AT&T	18.24
Bellis Fair Branch lease	Bellis Fair Mall Territories	5,357.00
Security Patch Embroidery	Bergen & Company	247.43
Pest management	Biobug	119.90
Bellis Fair Branch natural gas	Cascade Natural Gas	543.35
2024 All Hands Whatcom Summit	Chuckanut Health	45.00
Banking & credit card fees	City of Bellingham Interfund	26.16
Computer replacement allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	20,635.92
Facilities allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	89,506.85
Fleet Services	City of Bellingham Interfund	1,510.00
Qualified Energy Conservation Bond sinking fund	City of Bellingham Interfund	3,517.00
Radio Communication	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
Barkley & Bellis Fair branch water cooler rentals	Clearwater Systems	37.47
Printing	Copy Source	290.65
Copier leases and copies	Kelley Create	1,248.61
Alarm system maintenance	Guardian Security	176.10
Director's Retreat Lodging	La Quinta	426.19
Software Subscription	Ninite	240.00
eBooks, eAudiobooks	Overdrive Inc	18,642.38

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

FEBRUARY 2025 CLAIMS

Bellis Fair internet service	Pogozone Wireless	367.49
Staff Learning Day Event Rental	Port of Bellingham	562.50
Digital subscription	Seattle Times	19.96
Mileage and training reimbursement (programming & branch)	Staff	175.00
Barkley Branch operating costs	Talbot Services LLC	533.33
Microfische machine lease	Technology Unlimited	340.08
Borrower notices	Unique Management	1,605.40
Hotspot service	Verizon Wireless	1,281.84

Services and Interfund Charges Sub Total \$168,032.53

Capital Outlays

Envisionware Inc.	Automated Materials Handler	17,120.75
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CAPITAL OUTLAYS Sub Total \$17,120.75

Gift Fund

Cornhole	Amazon.com	73.01
Books	Baker & Taylor	23.88
Adult program snacks	Costco	44.46
Renovation Conceptual Design	Miller Hull	5,000.00
Anti-Racist digital media	Overdrive Inc	231.42

GIFT FUND OUTLAYS Sub Total \$5,372.77

Total General Fund claims \$215,573.70

Total General Fund & Gift Fund claims \$220,946.47

Library - Budget to Actual - General Fund

February 2025 16.7% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Grants		0		
Print and Copy Fees	2,338	15,000	12,662	16%
Lost, Damage & Non-resident Borrower Fees	2,373	16,100	13,727	15%
Fairhaven Auditorium Rental Fees		5,000	5,000	0%
Miscellaneous Revenues	165	0	(165)	
Total Revenue	4,876	36,100	31,224	14%
Expenses				
Salaries and Wages	575,990	3,369,234	2,793,244	17%
Personnel Benefits	236,392	1,368,283	1,131,891	17%
Physical Materials, Equipment and Supplies	24,743	307,932	283,189	8%
Services, Digital Materials and Interfund	625,591	2,672,160	2,046,568	23%
Total Expenditure	1,462,716	7,717,608	6,254,892	19%

Library - Budget to Actual - Gift Fund

February 2025 16.7% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Donations	9,375	150,000	140,625	6%
Total Revenue	9,375	150,000	140,625	6%
Expenses				
Gift Fund expenses	7,222	50,000	42,778	14%
Total Expenditure	7,222	50,000	42,778	14%



DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR March 18, 2025

Budgets are top of mind for all of us right now. Whether we are looking at City, County, State or Federal funding, the outlook is sobering. With continued declines in City revenue a likely possibility, Mayor Lund asked all City departments to identify 3% in spending reductions from budgeted 2025 operating costs paid out of the General Fund. For the Library, this would equate to a \$230,000 reduction, in addition to the 3% reduction that went into effect on Jan 1. (Rebecca Judd, Library Director)

WELCOME & INCLUDE

Certified Crisis Intervention Specialist II Training: Washington State Health Care Authority has invited people in the Behavioral Health field or who work with people in crisis regularly to attend a free 2-day Certified Crisis Intervention Specialist II Training using the EDGE approach to de-escalation. The training was presented by Growth Central Training and the National Anger Management Association, and I was able to attend as a representative of BPL in February. The training focused on the ways self-regulation, dysregulation, and crisis co-regulation empowers positive outcomes during crisis situations. Presenters taught specific crisis intervention tools to increase confidence in de-escalation and promote staff wellness and facilitated practice with live actors. The training was very relevant to the work we do in the Library. Information from the training is being shared with the Security Team and we are looking into opportunities to send more staff. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

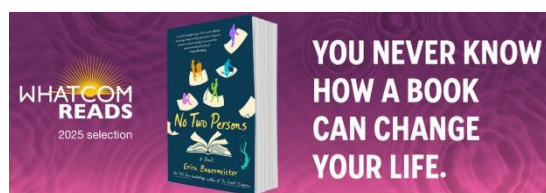
HEART Statistics: February marked one full year of the contract with Lake Whatcom Center to provide Library Embedded HEART Specialists support at Bellingham Public Library. HEART Specialists meet a wide range of needs in the Library and their presence has a significant impact on staff. For details on number of individuals served by HEART and types of support provided, see the table below. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

February 2024 - January 2025 HEART Reporting	Total
Total Number of Individuals Served	1662
Total Number of Unduplicated Individuals Served	504
Individuals that were Referred to Another Agency	800
Number of Individuals Entered into an Inpatient Setting, ER, or Incarceration Diversion Program	21
Total Number of Staffed Hours at the Bellingham Public Library	2867

ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY

Basic Computer Skills Classes: The Library and the Whatcom Literacy Council collaborated to hold eight Basic Computer Skills classes for community members who cannot afford computer classes. Adult Services Librarian Suzanne Carlson-Prandini worked with the Whatcom Literacy Council to schedule and set up this series of classes that utilize Northstar Digital Literacy lessons on basic computer skills, essential software skills and using technology in daily life. Each class is taught by a Whatcom Literacy Council volunteer, and each student learns on a Library laptop. These classes are extremely successful; we are thankful for this wonderful digital equity collaboration with the Whatcom Literacy Council. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

READ & LEARN



Whatcom READS: More than 953 free tickets have been reserved for [An Evening with Erica Bauermeister and Friends](#), at the Mount Baker Theatre, Friday, Mar. 14, 2025 at 7 pm. Bushwick Book Club Seattle will open the event with original music composed by local musicians and inspired by No Two Persons. Following the music, the

author will provide a talk about the book and will then be in conversation with Kelly Evert and Paul Hanson, co-owners of Village Books and Paper Dreams. At the conclusion of the evening the 2026 Whatcom READS title will be announced. On Saturday, Mar. 15, at 11 am BPL Adult Services Librarian Katie Bray will also offer an online version of [A Conversation with Erica Bauermeister](#). Special thanks to all staff involved in presenting these events for the community. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Preschool Storytime Success: Preschool Storytime (for ages 3 – 5 with an adult caregiver) attendance has been slow to build back up since restarting storytimes after COVID. Without the natural “pipeline” of Baby Storytime and Little Storytime (ages birth – 3) attendees graduating to Preschool Storytimes, numbers remained low as we also worked to build back awareness of and attendance for Baby and Little Storytimes. Patience and perseverance paid off, as Children’s Specialist Mandee Palmer now reports that her Preschool Storytime numbers have returned to pre-COVID levels, with a recent Salmon Storytime bringing together 50 pre-schoolers and their caregivers. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)



Community Salmon Release: It is almost time to say goodbye to our chum salmon! Community members and staff alike have loved watching the chum hatch, develop from alevin to fry and actively swim around the tank. The community is invited to help release the salmon into Whatcom Creek on Saturday, March 29 at 4pm. We will meet at the Maritime Heritage Park amphitheater then walk to the creek where each attendee will get to name, make a wish for and then release a chum salmon

into the creek. Many thanks to Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association, who made this endeavor possible. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

INFORM & INVOLVE

Library Giving Day

Library Giving Day is April 1: In partnership with Whatcom Community Foundation, the Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees will officially launch a \$3.5 million

private fundraising project on [Library Giving Day](#), April 1, to revitalize the Central Library's aging ground floor, including the Children's department and a relocated Teen space. To date, the Library has raised \$1.13 million toward this goal. Generous donors have also pledged to match up to \$100,000 in new gifts in 2025. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

National Library Week: "Drawn to the Library" is the theme of this year's National Library Week, scheduled for April 6 – 12, 2025. The American Library Association promotes this annual event as "a celebration highlighting the valuable role libraries, librarians, and library workers play in transforming lives and strengthening our communities." BPL is also planning its annual Library Snapshot Week for April 14 – 18. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

THRIVE & GROW

New Switches: Just before Christmas one of the two switches that serve the lower level of the Central library had a partial failure. Its Power-Over-Ethernet (PoE) component died, which impacted telephone handsets and sensors that get power through the switch, along with computers that access the network through the phones. NetOps handled the situation by temporarily connecting all devices needing PoE to the other switch. On the morning of March 11, NetOps replaced both those switches as part of an expedited planned replacement cycle. Internet service was unavailable on the lower level from 7:30 to about 9:30am. The hardware and 3-year software licensing for the new equipment cost \$18,278. We pay ITSD for networking services monthly through Interfund, so they covered the bill. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

Billing Notices by Email & SMS: The culmination of discussions that started years ago, we finally sent our first Billing notices to patrons by email and SMS on Wednesday, March 12. Discussions about switching bills from only print started before I came to BPL. Eventually, approval was sought from WCLS legal counsel and CoB Legal and Finance, and no issues were identified with the idea. Carmi Parker at WCLS took lead on working with III & UMS to make Polaris and MessageBee communicate about billing notices. She found that while MessageBee could send billing notices via email, SMS, and phone, Polaris would only properly account for the email and SMS notices. For now, at least, patrons who prefer phone notices will still receive billing notices by mail. The main result of switching these notices from print to email & SMS is that patrons will receive the notices more quickly. Secondly, each notice will cost us less to send. Email notices have zero marginal cost (we pay a yearly platform fee); SMS notices are currently 3.5 cents each; and we pay WCLS 78.2 cents per printed notice. In 2024 WCLS sent about 13,000 printed notices for us, of which over 10,500 were billing notices. Now, the vast majority of them will be sent via email or SMS. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

Purchasing Disruption: Our primary book vendor, Baker & Taylor, has been in extended negotiations with one of the "Big 5" publishers, Hachette, which has created a longer than usual backorder list for us. To give us an additional purchasing option we are getting set up to order books from a different wholesale vendor, Ingram. We'll still receive some degree of price discount from Ingram which will be an

improvement over ordering from Amazon. Unfortunately, it still means increased processing work, while available staff time is fixed. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

Facilities Update: When the days shortened this winter, we noticed that exterior lights around Central were not coming on at the times they had been programmed. After a lengthy wait, the new module arrived and was installed in early March. In addition, Public Works is looking for a solution to make our monochromatic public stairs safer. It's been regularly noted that folks routinely trip when going up and down the stairs. I asked Public Works to explore our options to add a contrasting stripe on the nosing of the top and bottom steps for each flight of stairs to improve visibility at the key transition points. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Judd

Safety Issues

Synopsis and mitigation measures

The purpose of this report is to describe the shift in the types of safety issues being experienced at Bellingham Public Library between 2020-2025 and to highlight some of the measures taken (or in progress) to address these concerns. Safety issues in our library locations generally fall into two broader categories – behavioral issues and physical building issues.

Behavioral Issues:

It is important to acknowledge that we are a shared public space that is open to everyone and there have always been inappropriate behaviors present in our buildings that created safety concerns. However, there was a noticeable shift in public behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic which continued to escalate when we reopened library locations after the closure. Library staff reported their experiences to supervisors and managers, and we document incidents in our incident reporting system which allows us to see these patterns.

During 2020 library buildings were closed, and we switched to providing curbside service at the Central Library. Camp 210, a homeless encampment, formed in Lee Memorial Park and all around the exterior of the library. This created some very real safety concerns for staff and the public. The camp was present for several months, and staff operated in a state of heightened awareness. Incidents from the camp included some serious issues like fires being set against the library building and an explosion/fire in proximity to the lower entrance which both resulted in the library shutdown while the situations were resolved. There were consistent reports of assaults, drug use, theft rings and COVID outbreaks in the encampment (in the local news), as well as staff being hassled by campers when coming in and leaving work which lead to a general feeling of a lack of safety. This feeling was amplified by staff watching volatile and illegal behavior taking place immediately outside the library while the camp was present. The library was closed again in January of 2021 for a couple of weeks while the City and Police dispersed and cleaned up the camps that surrounded the Library and City Hall.

When our buildings reopened to the public in the summer of 2021, staff experienced a lot of animosity from the public related to mask-wearing and other mandated COVID safety measures that we were required to enforce. Like our counterparts across the country, we noticed that there appeared to be an increase in mental health issues arising in our spaces and a lack of community resources to respond to these specialized needs.

In 2022 there was a dramatic uptick in incidents involving drug and alcohol use, and escalations of behavior related to substance use in our spaces. Staff found themselves dealing with increasingly volatile behavior including verbal and physical confrontations, daily complaints about drug use in restrooms and on library property, and staff concerns about exposure to unregulated substances. Staff were responding to possible overdoses while at work and there was a continued lack of community resources available for training and support. Two staff experienced physical assaults from the members of the public. These situations continued through the winter of 2022 and into 2023. The library being part of, and in proximity to, the winter emergency shelter options offered by the City was likely a contributing factor (a correlating escalation of incidents during winter shelter times). In the spring/summer of 2023 we were able to move forward with some measures to help deter substance use on library property.

While many steps have been taken to address safety issues created by working with the public, staff have accumulated experiences over a period of several years when community resources were not available to support the situations that were arising in library spaces. We continue working to address safety concerns - today and into the future.

Building/Space Issues:

Central and Fairhaven Library buildings both have security issues created by the design, layout and the landscaping near the buildings.

The **Central Library interior** has a problematic layout that includes:

- Much of the core library space has limited staff sightlines,
- Public hallways, entry points and stairwells cannot be seen by staff,
- Main restrooms are outside of core library spaces,
- Public service desks that lack defined/controlled entry, and
- Blind corners and tall shelving throughout the building.

Many of these issues are because the layout was designed in 1950 for a very different society, with the last update to most of the building done almost 40 years ago.

The **Central Library exterior** and immediate landscaping has a host of issues which have made it difficult to secure the library property. These issues include things like:

- Plaza spaces with no sight lines,
- Awnings covering entry areas,
- Gardens/nooks/other spaces not visible from any walkways or windows, and
- Overgrown landscape around the building

The existing exterior and landscape have made Library property attractive for camping, drug use, and other illegal behavior.

The **Fairhaven Library** has similar issues to Central. Most of the interior of the building is not visible to staff:

- Restrooms are isolated down a hallway and on a different floor,
- The entrance from the parking lot is isolated, and
- Stairwells/hallways/elevators are outside of the isolated library space.

The building has many hide-a-way and difficult-to-secure spots both inside and outside. The landscape is often overgrown, there are large "covered porch" areas, and many parts of the property are not visible from inside the building, the parking lot or walkways. These areas have become attractive for problematic or illegal behavior, camping, and drug use.

Building issues are more difficult to address. Most are structural and require large capital investment to improve. We approach every building project opportunity with an eye to resolve as many of these issues as possible.

Steps and measures taken to address safety/security concerns:

Safety/security needs are constantly evolving. We have taken many steps to address issues as they arise and recognize that this work will be ongoing.

Measure	Why?	Date	Other information
Established minimum staffing levels	Needed to establish the number of staff required to safely operate our spaces	Completed Nov 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determined minimum number of staff and appropriate levels of these staff to safely operate our buildings while open to the public
Main floor renovation – sightline improvements (2019-2021)	Poor sightlines in all areas of the library create opportunities for undesirable or illegal behavior	Spring 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architects were able to include some sightline improvements into the design: opening between Help Desk and Front door, moved all public seating into one area, lower shelving where possible, and Teen space better monitored
Added City cell phones at branch library locations	In case of power disruptions, evacuation, or emergencies - land lines and access to contact lists become unavailable; staff not required to have a personal cell phone at work	Completed Jan 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchased cell phones for each library branch • Ensured that cell phones are pre-programmed with all contacts that may be needed • Plugged in and remain charged near public service desks • Evacuation procedures include grabbing the emergency cell phones
Security cameras at Fairhaven	Inappropriate and illegal activities taking place around Fairhaven library exterior, and spaces staff can't monitor indoors	Completed Dec 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installed 3 exterior & 2 interior cameras • Project managed by Library • Funded by Library out of salary savings
Facilitated staff meetings to create "Safety and Ease Plan"	Needed a venue to gather staff input about safety concerns and develop a plan with staff participation ** Report in appendix	Completed Dec 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated by Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center (WDRC) • July & Sept 2022 staff sessions • Final report received Dec 2022 • Progress check was done one year later, and some work continues today

Measure	Why?	Date	Other information
Updates to Security Attendant job description and subsequent reclassification	The job description no longer accurately reflected the work environment	First draft submitted Jul 2022 – ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated to reflect the changes in our environment and more accurately reflect the situations being handled by Security staff. Classification review started 2024
Utilized RSU Security staff (supplemental)	Escalation of behavioral issues both inside and outside Central Library, necessitated the request for additional resources to assist with monitoring our spaces	Nov 2022-Sept 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requested supplemental security support by using the existing City contract with RSU Supplemented between 5-35 hours per week depending on emerging needs
DOSH consultation & report (LNI)	Expert guidance needed to address staff concerns about exposure to illicit substances from public use on library property	Mar - Apr 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requested LNI consultation through HR LNI interviewed staff and managers Recommendations in final report received Apr 2023 (all recommendations were implemented)
Plaza and bike rack areas closed	<p>Unable to continuously monitor outdoor spaces to ensure public and staff safety</p> <p>Illegal activities were taking place in outdoor spaces near Central</p>	May 2023 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better able to ensure ADA access is not blocked Fewer complaints received about inappropriate or unsafe behavior in these areas Has helped to reduce activities but requires a more permanent design solution
Naloxone administration allowed in library spaces	Increased drug use in the community resulted in more suspected overdoses in our spaces	Rolled out Jun 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy, procedures, supply and staff training developed Strictly voluntary for staff to participate Available in all library branches

Measure	Why?	Date	Other information
Installation of air quality sensors in public restrooms	Drug use in our public restrooms created an unsafe environment for staff and the public	Completed Sep 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifications enable quick response to activities taking place in restrooms • Research, supplier identification, contracting, project-management and continued administration and maintenance by Library staff • Installed at Barkley, Fairhaven and Central • Funded by Library out of salary savings
Improvements to incident reporting system	Existing system was difficult to search, did not always include necessary data, and was challenging to use data for analysis	Fall 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Done in consultation with Security staff • Created standardized fields to allow better searchability and reporting • Reviewed reasons for gathering data, updated fields to meet current needs • Updated existing data to make it useable in new format
Assessment of security equipment, tools, policies, procedures and training, as well as library facilities	The library does not have a security expert on staff, and wanted to ensure that we had an accurate picture of our safety and security needs ** Report included in appendix	Completed Dec 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracted RP Strategies to assess the following and provide recommendations to improve safety and security: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tools, equipment, and training needs for staff ○ Policies and procedures related to security ○ CPTED assessment of Central and Fairhaven buildings and grounds • Recommendations are being worked on and implemented in priority order.
Requested additional staff resources for Security	Existing resource levels did not cover all open hours, and only allowed for one-person security coverage	Funding approved Spring 2023, resources onboarded Oct 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council approved 1.5 additional FTE to augment our security resources

Measure	Why?	Date	Other information
Added HEART specialist in our space	Urgent need for someone with a social services background to provide a connection to service providers for members of the public	Started Feb 2024 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with Whatcom County Health Dept • HEART Specialist during all open hours • Lake Whatcom Center holds the current contract
Added new Learning Coordinator	Add much-needed capacity to standardize staff training and seek out new opportunities of more specialized training	Summer 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved connection to City training opportunities for safety training • Offered Active Shooter, AVERT, De-escalation, Conflict Resolution, Earthquake evacuations, training • Research of training options to meet needs as well as hiring outside providers
Added new Head of Public Services	Combined Public Services, Operations and Security team oversight was not sufficiently resourced	Dec 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New job descriptions for Public Services and Operations written and classified • Funding approved for 2023, position filled Dec 2023
Help Desk Redesign (2025+)	Need to address some of the building safety/security concerns identified in CPTED report	Design began 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff survey in 2024 highlighted the need for egress from the help desk • Staff feedback incorporated into preliminary design • Project funding is being explored as part of Phase 2 interior renovation
Added radios for security staff, PIC, HEART public service points	Improve communication between floors and staff during incidents and function as an internal panic button for help desk staff	Implemented 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of radio equipment funded by Library from salary savings • Used as emergency call tool at Help Desks • Carried by all attendants, HEART specialist, and PIC
Partnerships with community organizations	Increase staff knowledge of community resources, provide staff with more tools for handling situations outside standard library transactions	Started Jan 2023- Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various community services offer information sessions in-library • HEART program • Improved information flow between organizations by regularly participating in partner meetings

Measure	Why?	Date	Other information
Security Supervisor	Recognized the need for someone with experience in the field of security to provide guidance, training, and best practices to the security team	June 2024-Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This position is in the 2025 budget At time of hire, entire security team will move to PW to create a City-wide security team that will provide service to departments.
Updated Policies and procedures (Rules of Conduct)	<p>Response to new law created prohibiting weapons in the library.</p> <p>ROC need to establish clear enforceable boundaries and identify roles without ambiguity.</p> <p>Improved internal and external communication related to behavior and incidents.</p>	Jan 2024 - Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCW9.41.300 went into effect in June 2024 and prohibits firearms and other weapons in libraries. Created guidance for enforcement and appropriate signage. Updated ROC to allow consumption of small snacks, clarified an acceptable quantity of personal belongings, clarified the role of PIC vs Incident Point of Contact, removed "loitering" Expanded exclusion authority for library staff, reducing the dependence on police response for less serious violations More meetings for security staff to promote sharing of information; improved building signage to communicate behavior expectations
Updating emergency procedures	Ensure that staff have current information on how to respond to emergency situations	2022 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated procedures are consistent with City-wide training activities Improved emergency response tools and equipment

Appendix A: WDRC Report on Improving Safety and Ease (2023)

Appendix B: RP Strategies Report (2023)

Appendix C: Incident Report Stats

Bellingham Public Library
2023 Public Services Plan to Increase Safety and Ease for Staff and Customers

Over the past few years, Bellingham Public Library has experienced a steady escalation in the number, types, and severity of patron behavioral incidents, especially at the Central Library and Fairhaven branch. Staff have experienced stress caused by a multitude of factors, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, a lengthy encampment behind the Library in Lee Memorial Park, and threatening behavior and assaults on staff by patrons. Safety has become a persistent factor in the everyday work life of Library staff, who are by nature empathetic to all patrons but find it increasingly difficult to be resilient with decreasing recovery time between incidents.

As a collaborative problem-solving effort, this plan was developed over the course of three professionally-facilitated discussion sessions with Public Services staff. The sessions focused on the question of what was needed to improve safety and ease for our staff and customers. Themes that emerged from discussion were organized into five key action areas:

- 1. Provide Training and Support for Public Services Staff**
- 2. Prioritize Safety in Facilities Redesign and Renovations**
- 3. Strengthen Internal Communications**
- 4. Improve Incident Response**
- 5. Help all of our Clients**

Action area #1: Provide Training and Support for Public Services Staff

1. Host presenters from other organizations and community partners to increase knowledge among Library staff about community resources available to patrons or staff. Incorporate information into onboarding for new Public Services staff.
2. Seek learning opportunities and activities that help staff identify and respond to behaviors in our libraries that may pose a risk to safety and ease. Designate a note taker and share notes after trainings. Trainings with role playing and scenario drills preferred.
3. Seek learning opportunities that support and build a culture of resilience at the Library.

Action area #2: Prioritize Safety in Facilities Redesign and Renovations

1. Act as soon as possible on easy fixes: Remove plexiglass from Help Desk, add cameras at Fairhaven.
2. Include Help Desk improvements and main floor bathroom lock improvements in the 2023 Central Library renovation design.
3. Ensure that suggestions for improvements to the lower lobby area, children's section, and bathroom are included in the Central Library renovation design process in 2023, for construction in 2024.

4. Solicit staff feedback at key stages of Central Library renovation design process for improving safety at Central Library. Consider third-party safety assessment.

Action area #3: Strengthen Internal Communications

1. Continue to hold regular Public Services team meetings, dovetail with trainings.
2. Set up a wall board in a centrally accessible location so that all staff can post information they would like to share informally.
3. Establish system for knowing who is on site.

Action area #4: Improve Incident Response

1. Develop a plan on debriefing, to clarify who is responsible for convening a debriefing, who should be involved, what is the process, what happens afterwards, and how and what do we communicate with those who were not directly involved? Include this information as part of onboarding new Library staff.
2. Ensure easy access to up-to-date contact information for partner organizations.
3. Research options to improve flow of communication during an incident, including between floors and work groups.

Action area #5: Help all of our Clients

1. Establish a Skillshare schedule to bring in staff from social service organizations to share information and provide services.
2. Increase accessibility: hire more staff who are bilingual, provide more translation services for multiple languages, and improve services for visual and hearing impairments.
3. Research options for whether we can serve the needs of clients who need to make emergency phone calls.
4. In the upcoming Central Library renovation design process, consider establishing designated eating areas and quiet areas. Apply new policies and procedures to Branches if possible.

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY

SECURITY ASSESSMENT 2023

AUTHORS: Micah Scheff/Nick Cascaddan
RP Strategies LLC
rpstrategies360@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Bellingham Public Library is a library system with recently expanded locations. As the system increases its footprint into other neighborhoods, it takes on greater responsibility for a larger community. The number of incidents reported in the City of Bellingham have risen over the last five years, according to [Bellingham Police Crime Stats](#). The community continues to expect a safe and appropriate library environment, one in which all visitors have equitable access to library service and resources. The Library Board of Trustees have approved a Library Rules of Conduct, which work to define acceptable behaviors in the library and on library property and provides for personal safety as well as for the protection of materials, property, and facilities (4.101 RULES OF CONDUCT). The library has staffed five part-time employees with security responsibilities. They work alongside public services staff to enforce these rules.

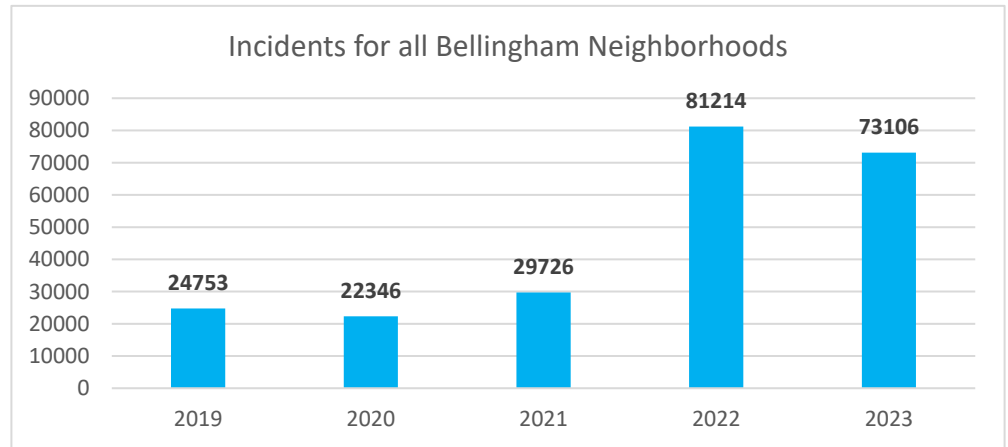


Figure 1: Chart is current through November 10th, 2023. Stats taken from <https://cob.org/gov/dept/police/news-police/crime-stats>

The Head of Public Services and Operations, Jen Vander Ploeg, and the Supervisor of Public Services, Michelle Becker, have determined that their security staff needs additional training and resources to accomplish their mission. Jen and Michelle invited consultants from RP Strategies to visit the Central and Fairhaven libraries and review current practices and procedures, identify strengths and weaknesses, and to make recommendations to improve the safety and security posture of staff and facilities.

OBJECTIVES

Report should include:

- A description of the current state of the evaluated areas based on your observations, conversations, and review of existing procedures from the site visit.
- Detailed and prioritized recommendations in the following areas:
 - Processes, procedures, and documentation
 - Tools and equipment
 - Training needs for:
 - Security Staff
 - Public Services Staff

- Supervisors & Managers
- Other Library Staff
- Facility/building issues
- Hiring practices and any other observations or recommendations related to library safety and security that may not fit into any category above.

METHODOLOGY

Phase I: Completed

Phase I includes a thorough analysis of the physical environments of the library using “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” (CPTED) principles. It also includes firsthand observations assessing day-to-day security practices, job shadowing with staff to understand current security procedures and tactics, and interviews with security staff to gather diverse perspectives.

Phase II: In progress, due by November 21st, 2023

Phase II includes a drafted assessment compiled of newly gathered information on the library’s current procedures, gap analysis against industry best practices, and recommendations prioritized by impact and feasibility. These findings and recommendations will be compiled into a comprehensive report accessible to technical and non-technical stakeholders.

Phase III: due by December 4th, 2023

The final version of the assessment is due no later than two weeks after completion of Phase II.

The following table is the two-day agenda, developed by Michelle Becker, to accomplish the first phase of the assessment.

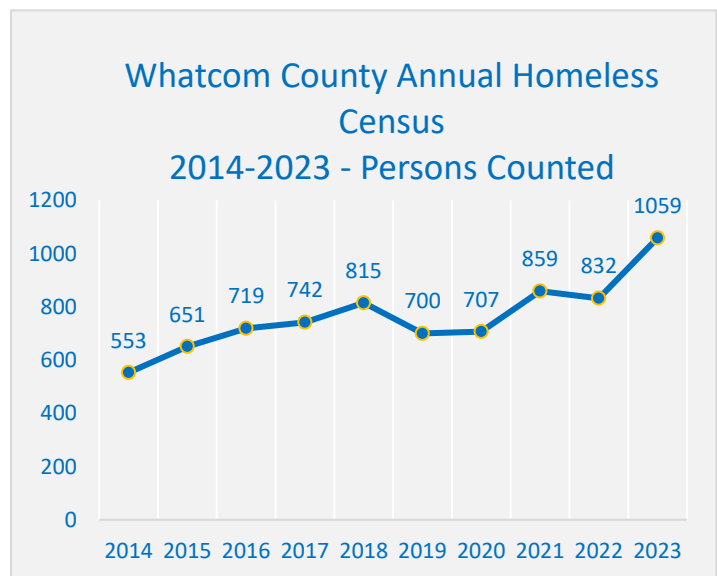
Date	Time	Activity	
Oct. 29 th	9:00-12:45	Introductions and then tour all branches	
	12:45-1:15	Observe opening	
	1:15-2:00	Lunch	
	2:00-3:00	Talk through policy, procedures, and a brief overview of our training materials along with possible training shortcomings, possible needs for additional equipment, etc	
	3:00-3:30	Shadow security team	
	3:30-4:00	Individual sit-down with Security Staff- Tim	
	4:00-4:30	Individual sit-down with Security Staff- Soleil	
	4:30-5:00	Observe Closing Procedures	
		9:00-9:30	Check-in with Jen and Michelle, initial thoughts and observations from previous day.

Oct. 30 th	9:30-12:00	Shadow security team- opening and beyond
9:00-6:00	12:15-12:45	Individual sit-down with Security Staff- Doug
	12:45-1:15	Individual sit-down with Security Staff- Dani
	1:15-2:15	Lunch
	2:15-3:00	Shadow security team
	3:00-4:30	Talk through observations with Jen and Michelle (mini wrap-up)
	4:30-5:00	Individual sit-down with Security Staff- Ethan
	5:00-6:00	Final observations/shadowing

OVERALL IMPRESSIONS:

Bellingham has a beautiful library system that is currently remodeling and expanding its locations. The system is incorporating CPTED into the remodels, but existing facilities could use additional attention to security and environmental design. This is evident by some of the reported issues around the Central and Fairhaven libraries. Recommendations for these locations are outlined for the Central and Fairhaven assessments on pages 13-26.

Based on a previous report, [Whatcom County Coalition to End Homelessness 2023 Annual Report](#), Bellingham, WA – like many cities in the US – have seen an uptick in insecurely housed individuals, due to rising costs, loss of housing, and substance abuse and/or mental health issues. Unfortunately, community resources struggle to keep up, leading to an increased reliance on libraries to meet basic needs. The various challenges of the pandemic have also contributed to a general feeling of anxiety and tension within communities, resulting in more frequent and higher escalating incidences.



After consulting with Jen and Michelle, and interviewing the Security and Information Attendants, a consensus within the system is that there are many opportunities for additional security tools and training. Further clarification on the scope of security work would also be beneficial. Jen and Michelle are committed to the success of the security staff. A new Head of Public Services (Katrina Buckman) has been hired and will supervise security staff, beginning in December 2023. Potential short and long-term goals have been identified, such as hiring more staff, purchasing additional equipment, conducting more training, and updating security staff uniforms. There is also opportunity to build closer relationships with partnering organizations such as the Bellingham Police Department, Base Camp, and Parks. Finally, hiring practices were discussed to help define the scope of work for the Security and Information Attendants.

HIRING PRACTICES

To add clarity to Security and Information Attendants' roles within the organization, we recommend exploring a few updates along with Jen's revisions to job descriptions:

- Exclude non-security-related tasks to eliminate confusion and provide a clear scope of responsibility.
- Consider eliminating the term 'Information Attendant' and replacing it with a title that precisely captures current responsibilities, which include managing escalated behaviors, addressing mental health and substance abuse, monitoring the well-being of individuals, and delivering exceptional customer service.
- Examples of alternative job titles:
 - Security Officer (SO)
 - Customer and Security Specialist (CSS)
 - Crisis Intervention Specialist (CIS)
 - Incident Response Officer (IRO)
 - Behavioral Response Officer (BRO)
 - Conflict Resolution Officer (CRO)

Security staff typically rely primarily on soft skills. We recommend highlighting those on-the-job descriptions. Important soft skills include:

- Interpersonal skills: The ability to build rapport, establish trust, and actively listen. Effective communication also involves the ability to ask clarifying questions to better understanding and convey information clearly and succinctly.
- Crisis management: The ability to remain calm and composed in high-stress situations. The ability to assess a situation quickly and make informed decisions to ensure the safety of individuals and property. The ability to effectively communicate with other team members, emergency responders, and the public in a clear, calm, and concise manner.
- Mental health and addiction awareness: Security staff should be knowledgeable and understanding of current mental health disorders and addictions. This includes the ability to recognize warning signs and respond appropriately, such as calling for backup or providing medical attention. Security staff should respond with empathy and provide appropriate support to individuals in distress.
- Empathy: Empathy is an essential skill for this position, as it involves actively listening to individuals to establish trust and rapport. This skill requires the ability to understand and consider different perspectives.
- Emotional intelligence: The ability to recognize and regulate one's own emotions, as well as the ability to understand and respond appropriately to the emotions of others. This skill is particularly important when dealing with individuals who may be upset or in distress.
- Records Management: Maintain confidentiality of sensitive records and follow BPL public disclosure policies.

JOB SHADOWING

I have found it insightful to include a brief job shadow following the security position interview. This includes walking together and describing the work as you move through different spaces. This offers a more casual setting for a conversation, provides additional information into the candidate's personality, and is a great first-hand look at the working environment for them. Several things I look for is their reaction to the patrons, see how they interact with other staff, and their body language.

INCREASED STAFFING

The consultants discussed staffing and found there are five Security and Information Attendants: One staff at 20 hours/week, two staff at 25 hours/week, and two staff at 35 hours/week. Overlapping shifts do presently occur. However, for the safety of both staff and public, we recommend a planned staffing level of two security staff assigned at all times throughout the day.

Working in a team is critical to successfully managing aggressive or challenging behaviors and situations. An additional security person can serve as back-up for the first responder; multiple situations can be handled simultaneously; more than one perspective will be lent to a situation; and the ability to "tap out" becomes possible, helping to avoid staff burnout.

RANKED STAFFING

We recommend creating a ranked structure within the security team. A clear leadership role provides a better structure for decision-making, becomes a central point of contact for administration and staff to relay information and concerns, helps administrators ensure tasks are completed, and fosters staff morale by offering promotional incentives. (We understand there are limited funds and resources at the time and are recommending setting this as a long-term goal.)

PROCESS, PROCEDURES, AND DOCUMENTATION

OBSERVATION: OPENING PROCEDURES

The main floor doors open automatically on a timer, while the lower floor doors require manual unlocking. If there are two Security and Information Attendants, they will divide their responsibilities between the floors. Occasionally, the lower floor is opened slightly earlier, leading to infrequent instances of patrons entering early.

RECOMMENDATION

Installing a timer or electronic locks downstairs will synchronize the unlocking of both floors, preventing patrons entering the building early when security staff are unavailable on the lower floor during opening. This improvement is critical if the building needs to be secured quickly to keep unwanted and dangerous activity out. Manually locking the doors in these situations requires staff to position themselves closer to potential danger. Manually locking also uses up valuable staff time.

OBSERVATION: CELL PHONES

Security and Information Attendants use library-issued cell phones for communication. This protects personal cell phones when taking pictures of evidence, as the library-issued phone can be subpoenaed. While walking with security staff we observed them receiving a call from the children's area reporting a welfare check. While on the phone taking the call, they were unable to inform other security staff. Coincidentally, the other security staff on duty was conducting a restroom check of the lower level and was able to provide backup. For the current phones used by security, apps such as WhatsApp or Signal allow for encrypted messaging services for instant messaging, voice, images, video calls, and other files.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the security staff utilize handheld two-way radios, in addition to carrying library cell phones.

PROS: Emergent situations unfold quickly, and information can change frequently within each situation. Radios offer faster communication back-and-forth than a cell phone. Radios can be equipped with a mic that easily clips to a shirt, freeing up a hand by not having to hold a phone. Radios are typically more durable than a cell phone, providing a longer life span. In an emergency, with the correct frequency, equipment, and permission, staff directly contact police by using a shared net. Lastly, cell phones come with monthly costs and the average lifespan is 2-3 years. A mid-to-high end radio can give the user 5-7 years, sometimes more.

CONS: Radio may have weaker signals in certain areas, which would require additional equipment, such as repeaters. If private communication is required, earpieces can be used to avoid disrupting patrons or alerting others to sensitive information.

OBSERVATION: RESTROOMS

The restrooms close simultaneously with the building at the end of the day. Security staff are scheduled to work 30 minutes after closing and public services are on desk 15 minutes after closing to empty money trays. Delays caused by patrons slow to exit restrooms could affect securing the building and completing final procedures before staff can leave.

RECOMMENDATION

Closing the restrooms 15 minutes before the building closure allows janitors to perform final checks and last minute cleaning. It would also free up security staff from monitoring and locking restrooms during closing procedures, allowing them to focus on sweeping the building. Ensuring restrooms are clear and locked *before* securing the building helps ensure all patrons exit on time.

OBSERVATION: CAMERA ACCESS

Security and Information Attendants do not have direct access to the buildings' security cameras.

RECOMMENDATION

Providing live access to the camera views offer multiple advantages for security staff. It expands the coverage area viewed by one person, expanding situational awareness, and allows immediate identification of issues or potential threats. Having footage to review resolves the potential manipulation of facts from reporting parties. In addition, it increases safety and confidence when responding to incidents by providing real-time information, allowing for proper planning.

OBSERVATION: PARKING

Security and Information Attendants do not have a dedicated parking space at the Fairhaven branch.

RECOMMENDATION

If the lot does not fill up consistently, consider reserving one space for security staff. This ensures a quick response to incidents and eliminates distractions, as staff won't need to search for parking and will have immediate access to the building.

OBSERVATION: BRIEFINGS

Shift briefings were not observed.

RECOMMENDATION

Daily briefings about recent topics are a great way to share information and stay current with strategies and issues. This is an opportunity to share excluded patron photos, expired exclusions, current strategies, specific patron updates, and additional facility/staff related topics.

OBSERVATIONS: SECURITY VEHICLE

There is a Library Mitsubishi Outlander parked in the loading dock that is available to Library staff for operational needs. Security does not have their own vehicle and if called to a branch, the Mitsubishi may be unavailable.

RECOMMENDATION

As a longer-term goal, consider equipping security staff with their own vehicle. This will provide guaranteed transportation if called to respond to an incident at a branch.

OBSERVATION: SHIFT LOGS

There is not a centralized document to keep security staff informed of day-to-day incidents and other calls for service.

RECOMMENDATION

Maintaining a “shift log” requires time and effort but offers crucial benefits. The log, including times, locations, responding parties, brief descriptions of what happened, along with outcomes/results, aids in tracking and analyzing trends. This analysis helps develop short- and long-term deployments, enabling more effective resource allocation and highlights the need for additional resources to key stakeholders. With the absence of a centralized dispatch center, each Security and Information Attendant is responsible for updating the log. A sample shift log will be sent with this assessment to illustrate its format and value.

OBSERVATION: PATRON PICTURES

Security sometimes keeps images of patrons at their desk when the person has committed a serious violation of the rules of Conduct and the trespass was not able to be served. If the desk is unstaffed, these images may be accessible to the public, unless they are secured in a drawer.

RECOMMENDATION

Consider ways to safeguard patron confidentiality, such as storing any personal information, including images in a locked drawer or maintaining only digital copies accessible to all security staff in a designated computer folder. While a minor risk, it's worth examining and considering any avoidable risks.

OBSERVATION: DISPATCH CENTER

No dispatch center currently exists. There is a computer provided for the Security and Information Attendants to use on the mezzanine level at Central.

RECOMMENDATIONS

If the team continues to expand, consider developing a dispatch center to manage the flow of operations. This center could be located off the public floor and can be used for updating shift logs, receiving calls for security service, deploying resources, and if granted, monitoring security cameras.

SECURITY TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

Number	Question	Response			Comments
		YES	NO	NA	
1	possess handcuffs		X		Not recommended at this time
2	possess pepper spray		X		Not recommended at this time
3	possess collapsible baton		X		Not recommended at this time
4	possess 2-way radio		X		Recommend purchasing radios for Security and Information Attendants. Suggested Nextel or Baofeng radios to start with for cost efficiency and upgrading at a later time when the department expands and there is money budget for radios. Earpieces are recommended when patrolling the interior, so they don't disrupt patrons or share sensitive or alarming information out to the public. Long term: explore creating a talk group on the city-wide net to expand coverage and communication throughout all locations.
5	possess taser		X		Not recommended at this time
6	possess Narcan	X			Optional. New staff are given the option to receive Narcan training. Recommended Security and Information Attendants carry one dose on their person during their shift if interested in providing this service. (some already do)
7	Receive allowance for hat, shirts, pants, socks, boots, gloves, protective vests		X		Polos, jackets, and vests are issued to staff and the cost is covered by the library.
8	Have a reliable supplier with great customer service	X			

COMMENTS:

It is strongly suggested equipping Security and Information Attendants with a tactical flashlight that can be carried on their duty belt. This is important for evening patrols outside and a bright light can be easily used as a deterrent to an attacker, allowing for escape. Ideal specs would be a minimum of 600 lumens, strobe function, rechargeable battery, and a push button located on the tailcap. Consultants recommended brands such as [Fenix](#), [Surefire](#), and [Streamlight](#).

Suggested tactical outfitters for belts, pouches, and flashlights: [Galls](#), [5.11](#).

We recommend Fenix TK16. It is handheld, has a rechargeable battery, has a strobe light function, push button on the tailcap, has Eco, Low, Medium, High, Turbo, and Strobe setting (30 to 3100 lumens) minimal training required to get used to the functions and changing brightness.

Uniforms: Staff have expressed that current uniforms can be misleading because they read more "informational" than "security". A uniform with a more distinct security look would help to delineate an authoritative presence to both public and staff. A simple fix would be to issue polo shirts with a department patch on the sleeves (patches can also be reused, vs embroidering on a new polo, which could help keep costs down).

We also recommend issuing duty belts that can comfortably support additional tools such as a radio and radio holder, a pouch for disposable nitrile gloves, and their current duty cell phone. (A note that uniforms should not mimic or match current law enforcement, or local private security companies.) Several examples of belts are here: [example 1](#), [example 2](#), [example 3](#). [Belt keepers](#) or a [Velcro inner belt](#) helps keep the belt secured in place and not move around. Ultimately it comes down to user preference.

SECURITY AND INFORMATION ATTENDANT TRAINING

Number	Question	Response			Comments
		YES	NO	NA	
1	Is there a designated Field Training Officer (FTO)	X			There is an onboarding plan developed by Michelle that new Security and Information Attendants go through upon hire.
2	Receive training on first aid/CPR/AED	X			Required to have this upon employment or shortly after employment.
3	Receive training on handcuffing			X	
4	Receive training on collapsible baton			X	
5	Receive regular training on a 2-way radio			X	
6	Receive regular training on a taser			X	
7	Tactical flashlight training			X	There are proper ways to utilize a tactical flashlight for safety that requires simple yet necessary training.
8	Receive regular training for Narcan	X			Optional for all staff.
9	Receive training on Use Of Force (UOF)		X		Recommend developing and training Security and Information Attendants on a BPL specific UOF continuum. This can reduce confusion as to what tools are available and how/when to use those tools.
10	Receive training on crisis intervention / trauma support	X			Ryan Dowd

COMMENTS:

FTO: long term goal – appointing a field Training Officer. Consider the option of having a Security and Information Attendant filling this role.

Use of Force Continuum: A use-of-force continuum serves as a structured guide for law enforcement and security personnel, outlining the appropriate level of force to be employed in various situations. It ranges from verbal commands to lethal force, with an emphasis on de-escalation and using the minimum force necessary to address a threat. The continuum's importance lies in promoting responsible and ethical use of force, considering factors such as threat severity and resistance level. By providing a systematic approach, it minimizes the risk of excessive force, ensuring a balanced and measured response. This model should be designed specifically for BPL based on what tools security staff are given and what administration deems acceptable responses at each increasing level of escalation.

Crisis intervention training (CIT): Research the WA Criminal Justice Training Center ([WACJTC](#)). They offer an 80-hour class to first responders and corrections departments but may allow security departments space available if they don't fill their class. On their training site, they do offer virtual classes as well. Local PD may be able to provide some resources for training on mental illness and crisis intervention.

SECURITY AND INFORMATION ATTENDANT TRAINING: continued

Number	Question	Response			Comments
		YES	NO	NA	
10	Receive training on de-escalation	X			Ryan Dowd High priority. See notes in comments section below.
11	Receive training on situational awareness		X		High priority. See notes in comments section below.
12	Receive training on Management of Aggressive Behaviors (MOAB)		X		Addresses behaviors that have escalated beyond de-escalation. Priority for Security and Information Attendants. See notes in comments section below. High priority.
13	Receive training on active shooter	X			Currently no refresher training. We recommend recurring training with a minimum of one per year. In-person is highly recommended so staff can walk through their environment to understand what to do and where to go in their facility.
14	Receive training on defensive tactics		X		This training compliments MOAB. This should be used as defensive tools rather than offensive. High priority.
15	Receive training on tactical flashlights			X	Low priority but useful. See recommendations in Security Tools and Equipment, page 10.
16	Receive training on defensive driving skills		X		Low priority but useful.
18	Receive training on emergency response: earthquake, fire, flood, heat, illness, smoke inhalation	X			Jesus Villahermosa disaster Zone – Gearing up for Emergencies. FEMA ICS 100 FEMA ICS 700
19	Receive training on securing open gatherings/events		X		Recommend specific training for securing events held on library property and how to observe crowds and risk management. This could be in the form of Executive Protection training which offers training for these skills. Low priority but useful.
20	Emergency management notification and procedures		X		Does not have a mass notification system in place.

COMMENTS: Top Priority: De-escalation, Defensive Tactics, active shooter

The current training from Ryan Dowd provides adequate information but should not replace in-person training. In-person de-escalation training offers distinct advantages by providing realistic simulations, immediate feedback, and interactive role-playing exercises. The hands-on experience allows participants to practice and refine their de-escalation techniques in a controlled environment, providing real time feedback on verbal and nonverbal cues. This helps develop a nuanced understanding of diverse situations, fostering a more authentic and comprehensive learning experience. We highly recommend in-person training with someone who understands library culture.

While elements of situational awareness are integrated into de-escalation training, the aspects go far beyond de-escalation and should be trained separately to address observation skills, environmental awareness, threat recognition, decision making under stress, risk assessment, and safe strategies. This is also best received in-person.

MOAB: There are three escalating behavior levels: baseline, upset, and violent. MOAB focuses on behaviors beyond upset, where de-escalation is no longer effective. In-person training, like MOAB, is crucial due to its importance in handling escalated situations, similar to de-escalation training.

I suggest [Olympic Tactical](#) for Executive Protection training as a supplementary program. Even though staff aren't actively safeguarding high-value assets, the principles and concepts from this training can be applied to everyday security tasks. This training is particularly relevant to special events. Although our training duration was four days, it can be tailored to meet your specific requirements. I've received positive feedback regarding Executive Protection training from [EES](#). However, it's important to note a couple of considerations: the training is conducted out of state, and the associated costs are relatively high.

If you need to hire extra event security or conduct surveillance on a site, I recommend [Olympic Secure Investigations](#). They are based out of Washington, and I've worked with them before, great people!

RECOMMENDED PUBLIC SERVICE STAFF TRAINING

Number	Item	Comments
1	De-escalation	Highly recommend in-person training. Current Ryan Dowd training is a valuable supplement, but staff need in-person discussions for the reasons listed in the comments on page 12. High priority.
2	Situational awareness	Highly recommend in-person training. High priority.
3	Management of Aggressive Behaviors (MOAB)	Highly recommend in-person training. High priority.
4	Active Shooter	Currently no refresher training. We recommend recurring training with a minimum of one per year. In-person is highly recommended so staff can walk through their environment to understand what to do and where to go in their facility.
5	emergency response: earthquake, fire, flood, heat, illness, smoke inhalation	Jesus Villahermosa disaster Zone – Gearing up for Emergencies. FEMA ICS 100 FEMA ICS 700
6	Emergency management notification and procedures	No "library-specific system", but there is an emergency notification system for all City Staff (managed by Emergency Management).

COMMENTS:

For de-escalation training, same comments as the Security and Information Attendant training. In-person is highly recommended to discuss site specific topics.

MOAB: Critical for all staff for the same reasons as security staff. It addresses recognizing signs, what to do when confronted, and managing the scene to stay safe.

[Partners In Emergency Preparedness](#) is another good resource for managers and staff that I've used to supplement trainings for emergency management through webinars.

RECOMMENDED TRAINING FOR SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS

Number	Item	Comments
1	De-escalation	Highly recommend in-person training. Current Ryan Dowd training is a decent supplement, but staff need in-person discussions for the reasons listed in the comments on page 12. This training is top propriety.
2	Situational Awareness	Highly recommend in-person training
3	Management of Aggressive Behaviors (MOAB)	Highly recommend in-person training
4	Active Shooter	Highly recommend in-person training
6	EMAP Accreditation	This is an extensive voluntary program that prepares your organization for all emergency response functions. If that is an area BPL is interested in focusing on, we recommend looking into this.
8	Staff Support Plans: Aftercare	Aftercare programs developed locally by staff can include members of the committee, resources for post traumatic incidents, L&I information, designating a “battle buddy”, options for rides home, check-ins and debriefs. This is up to the committee to develop and compliments the Employee Assistance Program well.
9	CPTED designation	Receiving a CPTED practitioner designation involves completing a 40-hour basic training followed by a 24-hour advanced course. This certification is valid for four years, after which recertification is required. The impact of CPTED in reducing crime rates is well-documented. Having a supervisor or manager with this expertise would be highly effective in shaping comprehensive trainings, developing safety-centric policies and procedures, and effectively communicating safety requirements to key stakeholders.

COMMENTS:

De-escalation, MOAB, Situational Awareness, Active Shooter, and emergency management will be the same trainings as regular staff.

[Partners In Emergency Preparedness](#) is another good resource for managers that I’ve used to supplement trainings for emergency management through webinars and these can be assigned out to staff.

For mangers and staff, Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency ([CISA](#)) has and endless amount of information for free on their site. They also offer many [free training courses](#) online. We highly recommend looking into this to supplement your security program.

Implementing a learning management system would provide several benefits to the library. It would provide a centralized education center that can track and record progress for management, create accountability, reduce cost associated with traditional in-person training, and allow staff to take trainings at their own pace. I’m familiar with Cornerstone which has an intuitive interface, and have used [Articulate](#) to develop trainings. Articulate has many strengths and capabilities but would require training to learn the software. The learning curve has been short, in my experience, and they provide many tutorials.

**OTHER LIBRARY STAFF RECOMMENDED TRAINING
DELIVERY DRIVERS/CUSTODIANS/FACILITY WORKERS**

Number	Item	Comments
1	Tactical driving/parking/safe arrivals and departures	This covers the basics of moving through traffic, surveying your site before exiting the vehicle, how to safely and tactically park the vehicle, and emergency egress.
2	Tactical flashlight training	There are proper ways to utilize a tactical flashlight for safety that requires simple yet necessary training. Highly effective for those traveling from one location to another during the hours of darkness.
3	Receive training on situational awareness	This is the same training other staff receive, but highly recommended for those often traveling from one location to another.

COMMENTS:

All staff will benefit from de-escalation, situational awareness, MOAB, and Active Shooter. The trainings listed here would benefit those driving from one location to another to perform duties such as maintenance, custodial, gardening, etc,

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)



Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach of crime prevention that uses urban and architectural design and the management of built and natural environments. CPTED strategies aim to reduce victimization, deter offender decisions that precede criminal acts, and build a sense of community among inhabitants so they can gain territorial control of areas, reduce crime, and minimize fear of crime. CPTED is pronounced 'sep-ted' and it is also known around the world as Designing Out Crime, defensible space, and other similar terms. At its core, CPTED has four key components - natural surveillance, natural access control - territorial reinforcement – maintenance.

Micah received his designation from the National Institute of Crime Prevention on January 20, 2021, and is currently a member of the US CPTED Association. In conducting the assessment, two branches, Central and Fairhaven, were chosen due to the higher frequency of incidents. The evaluation included the external perimeter, parking lot, and interior. Factors taken into account during the assessment were lighting conditions, maintenance levels, traffic calming measures both outside and inside the premises, vehicular routes, wayfinding, interior layouts, and the presence of security assets like locks and cameras.



This report will be assessing the following two locations, Central and Fairhaven.

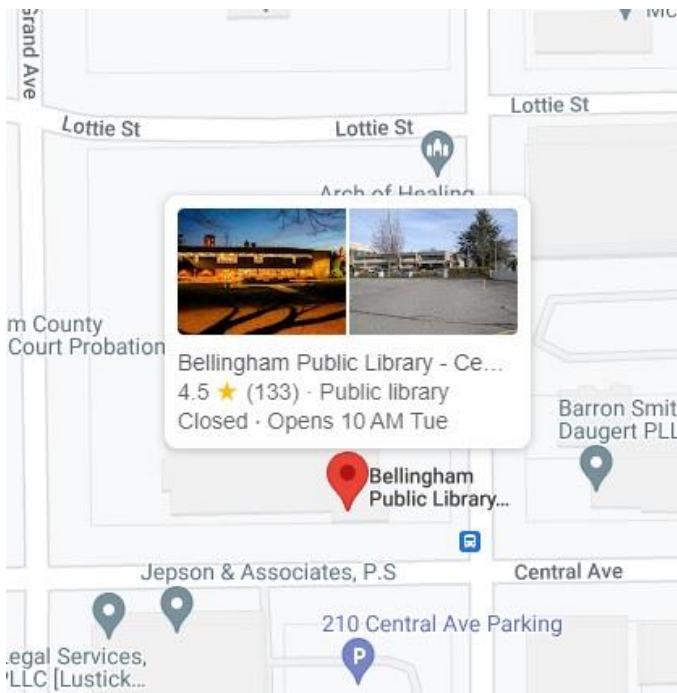


Figure 1: Central

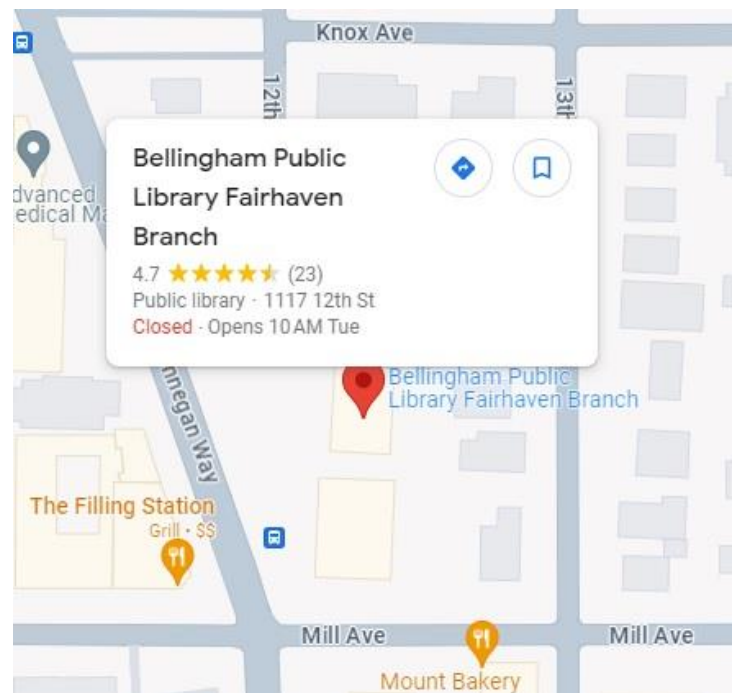


Figure 2: Fairhaven

CPTED Assessment: Central Library

CPTED Assessment: Central Library		
LOCATION	NUMBER OF STAFF	HOURS
Central Library 210 Central Ave Bellingham, WA 98225	70-80 total in the system	Monday: 10 am – 7 pm Tuesday: 10 am – 7 pm Wednesday: 10 am – 7 pm Thursday: 10 am – 7 pm Friday: 10 am – 6 pm Saturday: 10 am – 6 pm Sundays 1 – 5 pm
Overall strengths	Overall weaknesses	Action plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pathways lead to entrances. ✓ Use of art around the library. ✓ Bike rack is in a highly visible area. ✓ Vegetation along the south sidewalk is well maintained. ✓ Beautiful vegetation. ✓ Vegetation or other objects outside do not provide access to the rooftop. ✓ Restrooms added on main floor and have great sightlines to the staff desk. ✓ Teen area located by staff desk. ✓ Computers have dividers creating a sense of individual space. ✓ Main floor has a very open feel and bright colors. ✓ Lighting on the main floor is excellent. ✓ Cameras installed to cover entrances and exits. ✓ Adequate natural surveillance at the main entry. ✓ Convex mirrors in corners and the main interior stairwell. ✓ Large windows into the park provide natural surveillance from the main floor. ✓ Security desk positioned at the main entrance. ✓ New people counters do not obstruct the entryway. ✓ Downtown ambassadors and RSU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Landscaping is overgrown, but it does not fall under BPL. Parks maintenance of the grounds is not consistent. * Lighting could use updating. * Colors are a bit lackluster on the exterior and upper/lower levels. * Retaining brick wall on the east creates opportunities for unfavorable activity. It may promote bad activity such as the current bike theft issues. * Exterior west stairwell creates a hiding space below. * Not equipped with duress buttons or lockdown mechanisms. Doors at the north entrance need to be manually locked. * The main entrance needs to have the power cut to keep them closed and a gate manually rolled out to stop access to the main floor. * There is no official eating area. * Southwest corner (fiction stacks) muffles voices and lacks sight lines (pointed out by Jen and Michelle) A yell for help could not be heard at the help desk. * Access badges display names and where the badge is from. If lost, anyone could easily identify where the card grants access to and they have a staff name. * Cameras cannot be monitored by security staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Encourage communication with Parks * Renovations are ongoing for the lower and mezzanine level. Continue incorporating CPTED principles into the design. Include BPD CPTED practitioners in the remodeling of the lower level and upper mezzanine. * Consider updates to the lighting. LED requires less power compared to metal halide or high-pressure sodium, making them more environmentally friendly. They also have a longer life span, are more durable, and provide a brighter dispersment of light. Illuminating Engineer Society (IES) PR 20-14. (There may be a more current version.) * Consider bright colors and celebrated features on the interior and exterior. The Bellis Fair Branch entrance has incredible visibility and is bright and eye catching. * Consult with security staff during renovation discussions for input.

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent Terms: does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)								
Number	Initial Impressions	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Initial impressions of the library grounds are positive				x			
2	Initial impressions of the library itself is positive				x			
3	Initial impressions of the library interiors are positive				x			
Number	General facility Security	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Duress buttons for staff						x	
2	Lockdown buttons for entrances/exits						x	
3	Designated safe rooms						x	
4	PA and other backup announcement system			x				
5	Minimum staffing levels are identified			x				
6	Access control monitoring system							x
7	Staff areas have controlled access				x			
8	Contractors and vendors have monitored access (badges) and are briefed on safety protocols (weapons in buildings, etc.)							x
9	Camera system / video monitoring and storage capability		x					
10	Secondary exits are alarmed		x					
11	Information for emergency response is posted in staff areas							x
12	First aid kits / AEDs accessible				x			
13	Fire extinguishers serviceable, maintained, and signage posted			x				
14	Power fail emergency phone lines into the building				x			
15	Area designated for EMS/media							x
<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Consider installing duress buttons at staff desks that alert security assistance is needed. * Live monitoring of the camera system would provide continuous situational awareness of a wider area, The ability to detect threats before they happen, and more accurate information before staff respond, increasing their safety. *Consultants recommend installation of quick locking mechanisms/devices for entrances in a situation where there is dangerous activity that may come inside. This could be electronic locking buttons or hardware to secure doors from opening. ✓ There is a tour of safety and first aid supply locations provided during new hire orientation. * Work in safety features such as duress buttons and lockdown features. * Consider removing a middle row of books in the stacks that run east and west on the main floor to increase the line of sight and help carry sounds to the rest of the floor. To keep that space active, it could be used for small displays that wouldn't cancel the sound or sightline. * Consider providing access to the camera system for the Security and Information Attendants to monitor. * Is it possible to include a vestibule for the north entrance for layered security and equip with auto locks and incorporate lockdown devices into the design. * Auto locks for the main entrance with security access. 								

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent **Terms:** does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)

Number	GROUND	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Signs direct approaching vehicles and pedestrians to appropriate entries to the library property.				x			
2	Entries to the library property are attractive and welcoming and indicate libraries name.			x				
3	Creates natural access.				x			
4	Entries to the library property can be easily monitored.				x			
5	Secondary pedestrian entries are secured during library hours.				x			
6	Secondary vehicular entries are secured during library hours.				x			
7	Bike racks are easily monitored and in good condition.			x				
8	Access to dumpster areas are controlled and eliminate hiding spots.			x				
9	Vegetation is well maintained (2' 6' rule) and does not cover lighting or block natural surveillance.		x					
10	Positive activity generators throughout.			x				
11	Shows ownership of the space (art, signage, territorial reinforcement in place)				x			
12	Complimentary use (multi-purposed to encourage activity, natural surveillance, and contact with people throughout the day)			x				
13	Eliminates isolated areas.		x					
14	Entrapment areas are closed off during afterhours.		x					
15	Lighting is consistent, eliminates light trespass, and is protected from vandalism.							x
16	Pathways are illuminated to recognize people from 30 ft distance at night.							x
17	Grounds, equipment, and signs are well maintained.		x					
18	Landscaping elements do not allow easy access to roofs, windows, or other upper-level areas.					x		

COMMENTS:

- * Increase natural surveillance into the Japanese garden.
- * The entrance by CHI needs to be manually locked and is close to the children's area. It's ideal to have parents/guardians walk past staff before they exit the building.
- * Bike racks along Central Ave are in a visible spot, however there are reports of high bike theft. Increased natural surveillance and activate that space with other programs to show territorial ownership. Replacing the glass block wall by the stairwell with large glass windows could create a greater sense of surveillance combined with human form visible through the window (posters, art, etc.)
- * Close off isolated areas during the night.
- * Plaza by the main entrance is closed to the public during open hours. Activate this space. Closed Signs are unwelcoming.
- ✓ The Garden Club takes care of the vegetation along Central Ave. It is well kept and clean.
- ✓ The park on the north side is not the library property but the walkways are open and the flow of traffic directs the eye to the library entrance. There are also multiple entries/exits to the park.
- * Consider adding lighting along pathways at a pedestrian level.
- ✓ 3 security cameras along the north side of the library (bike racks, CHI)
- * Overgrown vegetation is blocking the lighting in some areas along the streets.
- * Strongly consider upgraded lighting to LED.
- * Bring in "human form" around the bike racks and the park to increase the feel of natural surveillance and create an even more welcoming environment to families. (sculptures, silhouette cutouts, pictures of kids/families/bright colors)

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent Terms: does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)								
Number	BOOK DROPS	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Book drop locations are clearly marked by signage, pavement, and curb treatments.			x				
2	Book drop areas are well lit.							x
3	Book drop areas are easily monitored.				x			
4	There is sufficient capacity in Book drop areas for the orderly movement of vehicles and people.				x			
5	There is sufficient capacity in the book drop itself for books. (long holidays where staff are unable to empty)							x
COMMENTS:								
Number	VEHICULAR ROUTES	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Vehicular travel routes are clearly marked.	x						
2	Vehicular travel routes are in good condition.			x				
3	There are traffic-calming measures on adjacent public streets that limit vehicular speeds at crossings.			x				
4	Delivery activities are orderly and do not interfere with normal library functions.					x		
COMMENTS: 2-way lanes of traffic do not have a yellow divider line on any adjacent streets. I did not notice speed limit signs, bulb outs, speed bumps, crosswalk lights. There were cross walks, 4 way stops, and a bulb-out at the crosswalks. All deliveries are directed to use the staff parking lot/loading dock area. The door is secured, and couriers ring the doorbell for staff to respond. Staff receive goods directly into the staff area on the west side. This is a great centralized area to receive all packages away from the public, minimizing disruptions and suspicious deliveries.								
Number	PARKING LOTS (loading dock)	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Parking lot entrances and exits are clearly marked.			x				
2	Parking areas are delineated for staff and visitors.						x	
3	All parking spaces are clearly marked.		x					
4	Parking lots are easily monitored / visible to adjacent buildings.					x		
5	Parking lots are in good condition.			x				
6	Parking lots are well lit.							x
7	There are no signs of vandalism in parking lots.			x				
8	Vehicular traffic flows in an orderly manner in and out of parking lots.			x				
COMMENTS: *1.8 foot-candles per square foot at 18 inches above surface from dusk until dawn. * Only 1 parking lot for the loading dock, consider restriping and curbs painted. *Signage for the parking lot/loading dock is common. Small sign on a post indicating "library staff parking only." *Space creates opportunity for unfavorable activity. It was mentioned people will urinate by the delivery truck along the wall. Would it be possible to remove the brick wall and replace with a decorative wrought iron (or other material) fence at 4 ft tall to create a sense of openness while still supporting territorial reinforcement? * There was some evidence of graffiti on the dumpster. * Dumpsters could be closed off to prevent dumpster diving, vandalism, and illegal dumping. * The entrance is small but there are only a few vehicles that park in there. * Dumpsters could be moved off to the side to increase visibility to the sidewalk when exiting the parking lot.								

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent **Terms:** does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)

Number	PATHWAYS/WAYFINDING	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	There is a wayfinding system, which includes signs; plant materials; and artwork, monuments, or other landmarks.				x			
2	Pedestrian crossings of adjacent public streets are clearly marked by signage, pavement treatment and/or curb treatment.			x				
3	Pedestrian pathways on library property are easily monitored.			x				
4	Pedestrian pathways on library property are in good condition,				x			
5	Pedestrian pathways on library property are well lit.							x
6	Pedestrian flows on library property are orderly.				x			
7	There are pedestrian amenities such as seating and trash receptacles located along key pedestrian pathways.				x			
8	Pedestrian amenities are in good condition.				x			
9	Pedestrian pathways and gathering areas are easily monitored.				x			

COMMENTS:

- * Overgrown vegetation blocks natural site lines to the east and west.
- * The location in Bellingham allows for a lot of natural surveillance around the perimeter.
- * Wayfinding: Bellingham Public Library 210 is largely displayed above the main entrance and there is a sign on the edge of the Central Ave Plaza.
- * The signage on the southeast corner indicated BPL.
- * Paths and sidewalks lead pedestrians to the entrances. Disabled parking sign located along N Commercial St.
- * The north entrance provides an opportunity for a grand celebrated entrance! The park and walkways naturally draw the eye down to the middle of the library.
- *The staff entrance along Central Ave is narrow, covered, and has poor sightlines and may be problematic if someone is staying in there to get out of the rain/weather.

Number	EXTERIOR STAIRWELL	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Exterior stairs, balconies, ramps, and upper-level corridors are well lit.		x					
2	Pedestrian flows are orderly.				x			
3	Exterior stairs do not create hiding or hard-to-see areas.		x					
4	Exterior stairs, balconies, ramps, and open upper-level corridors are visible from windows or doors of the library buildings, parking lots and/or other activity areas.				x			

COMMENTS:

Lighting is old and should be upgraded to LEDs.
Stairs on the west side create a shelter underneath the landing and the design of the stairs themselves create hiding space.

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent Terms: does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)									
Number	MAIN ENTRANCE/LOBBY	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO	
1	The lobby is attractive, cheerful, and inviting.			x					
2	Entry security devices are unimposing.						x		
3	Pedestrian flows through entry security devices are orderly.				x				
4	The lobby is well lit.							x	
5	The lobby is easily monitored.					x			
6	Signs provide directions to major areas, i.e. CHI, Teen, Holds, elevators, etc				x				
7	Windows in the lobby area provides natural surveillance opportunities.					x			
8	Activity within the library area is easily monitored.					x			
9	The lobby is in good condition.					x			
10	Visitors have distinctive and highly visible nametags.							x	
11	Security personnel wear distinctive clothing and have distinct, visible identification badges		x						
<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Consider a more “celebrated entrance:” areas outside of a lobby have great art installation opportunity, including on ceilings * Tiles, railings, posters, and a bright welcoming carpet inside can help to offset any “do not” signage ✓ Large windows by main entrance are unobstructed and provide great natural surveillance outside. The lobby is great. * Could use more wayfinding signage even though most of the patrons probably already know where everything is at. * Guests are issued a badge upon arrival, but they are not very visible so can cause confusion when seen inside a “staff only area.” * The security desk is a positioned at a great spot by the entrance but there is nothing identifying that they are security. * “Plaza Closed” signage outside the main lobby may come across as confusing or off-putting; finding ways to activate the space will create a more welcoming environment. (Drawing in positive activity will also help reduce bike thefts.) * Consider signage that replaces “Nos” with more positive language (can work with comms team on this?) 									
Number	INTERIOR STAIRS / ELEVATORS	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO	
1	Interior stairs and balconies are well lit.					x			
2	Pedestrian flows are orderly.					x			
3	Interior stairs do not create hiding or hard-to-see areas.				x				
4	Interior stairs and balconies are in good condition.					x			
5	Staff only elevators is limited to authorized individuals (badges etc.)						x		
<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The addition of quarter domed mirrors in the stairs greatly improves visibility around the turns. ✓ Only elevators are the public elevator and the freight elevator. Freight elevator is not accessible from public areas and both elevators run the full height of the building. 									

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent **Terms:** does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)

Number	CORRIDORS/HALLWAYS/INTERIOR	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Interior corridors are well lit.				x			
2	Interior corridors are easily monitored.			x				
3	There are no hiding places.				x			
4	Pedestrian flows are orderly.				x			
5	Interior corridors are of sufficient capacity to allow orderly movement.					x		
6	Interior corridors are free of obstacles that impede orderly pedestrian flow.					x		
7	Interior corridors are in good condition.				x			

COMMENTS:

- * The back corner on the main floor is a dead zone for sightlines and sound. Most of the main floor has great lines of sight and conveys an open airy feeling.
- * Service points on the main floor have space around them (printers, service desk). A few friction points would be the back corner in the computer area and the far back southwest corner.
- * Internal stairs leading to the staff area are narrow and have limited visibility at the bottom when walking out to the main floor. (Not the main stairwell by the entrance)
- ✓ The spacing of tables and chairs is excellent on the main floor. Computers with dividers provide more privacy and a feeling of space from the person next to you.
- * The stack between the Teen section and DVDs could be lowered to open up that area.
- ✓ Study rooms have great visibility into them and are placed in a highly trafficked area for natural surveillance.
- ✓ Check out stations have plenty of space to set down books and manage personal belongings, kids, strollers, etc while checking out.
- * ADA checkout did not have signage indicating its purpose although it's most likely well known by now. *
- ✓ The cutout in the checkout wall is a great renovation and provides visibility to the exit and opens up the room.
- ✓ Outlets are kept covered.
- * The current hallway downstairs doesn't provide much visibility into other rooms. Try to increase window space.

Convex mirrors are a great addition, providing visibility around tight corners/spaces.

Number	RESTROOMS: MAIN FLOOR	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Multiple stall restrooms have open zigzag entries, rather than door systems.						x	
2	Restrooms with solid doors have vents to increase the opportunity for auditory surveillance.						x	
3	Restroom entries are easily viewed from other active areas.					x		
4	Restrooms are well lit.					x		
5	Restroom light controls are secured to prevent unauthorized access.							x
6	There are no signs of graffiti.					x		
7	There are no other signs of vandalism.					x		
8	Stall doors and locks are in good condition.					x		
9	Toilets, urinals, and lavatories are in good condition.					x		
10	The restroom ceiling treatment does not provide access to a hiding place.							x
11	Restrooms are in good condition.					x		

COMMENTS:

- * Restrooms on both floors share the same plumbing.
- ✓ Since recently installed, Verkada has been reported to decrease drug usage incidents.
- * Explore strategies for tracking usage times. Implementing scheduled welfare checks for single-stall restrooms not only lets patrons know that the facilities are monitored but also serves as a preventive measure against instances where individuals might face prolonged unconsciousness, requiring timely assistance.

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent Terms: does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)								
Number	RESTROOMS: LOWER FLOOR	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Multiple stall restrooms have open zigzag entries, rather than door systems.	x						
2	Restrooms with solid doors have vents to increase the opportunity for auditory surveillance.						x	
3	Restroom entries are easily viewed from other active areas.	x						
4	Restrooms are well lit.				x			
5	Restroom light controls are secured to prevent unauthorized access.							x
6	There are no signs of graffiti.			x				
7	There are no other signs of vandalism.			x				
8	Stall doors and locks are in good condition.			x				
9	Toilets, urinals, and lavatories are in good condition.			x				
10	The restroom ceiling treatment does not provide access to a hiding place.			x				
11	Restrooms are in good condition.			x				
<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Negative activity generators in the lower restrooms: long hallway before entering creates a pinch point, ventilation, lack of natural surveillance. *Consider lower stall door heights. *Zig zag entries can be effective, also consider the ability to close off and lock the restroom to isolate and exhaust fumes. *Separate the sinks and hand dryer area from the toilet stalls. Patrons will have to exit the main restroom to use the sinks placed in a public space. This will free up congestion in the main restroom area and also bring more natural surveillance to the sinks to deter unwanted and prolonged activity that is associated with these areas. 								

CHILDRENS/TEEN AREA
<p>THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN DESIGNING YOUTH SPACES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Construct with sound absorbing materials. * Have materials that are functional but also add beauty and visually appealing artistically. * Use natural environmental elements built into the design like wood or other natural materials. * Creation of variety of spaces, some interactive, some imaginative, some quiet, some louder spaces, messy art space, reading space, etc. * Create quiet, calming spaces. For kids who have experienced trauma or neurological challenges. * Use native flora/fauna in designs * Also allow for messy and louder areas where kids can be kids. Singing, clay, storytelling, can be done with furniture, separate from quiet spaces. * Allows kids to engage with nature and interact. <p>FURNITURE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Durable * Acoustic properties * Fabric has moisture control and able to be cleaned. * Organic shapes * Make it cute and fun. Add humor where you can. * Include furniture that can accommodate different activities. * Walls that can open and combine indoor/indoor or indoor/outdoor spaces to accommodate noise and weather and also multipurpose activities for different sizes.

CPTED Assessment: Fairhaven Branch

LOCATION	NUMBER OF STAFF	HOURS
Fairhaven Branch 1117 12 th St Bellingham, WA 98225	2	Monday: 10 am – 2 pm Tuesday: 10 am – 2 pm Wednesday: 2 – 6 pm Thursday: 2 – 6 pm Friday: 2 – 6 pm Saturday: 10 am – 2 pm Sunday closed

Overall strengths	Overall weaknesses	Action plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Beautiful Carnegie building. ✓ 5 cameras installed covering entry points and exterior. ✓ Security checks at the beginning and end of the day. ✓ Low incident count. ✓ Good sightlines (main flr) ✓ Staff entrance (most used) is not visible from staff areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *ADA entrance has issues with patrons camping at the entrance. This is most most-used entrance and not visible from staff areas. *Unable to call for Downtown Ambassador/Risk Solutions Unlimited (RSU) support due to being away from the core downtown area. * Library does not own some of the areas around the exterior. * Old lighting. *Tight hallways and the elevator have free access. *Interior stairs have had people hanging out in that area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Designate safe rooms (restrooms) and create training on how/when to use them. *Restrict access to the stairs leading up. *Regular maintenance for the landscaping. *If there is an issue with people hanging out around the exterior, consider restricting access there)

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent **Terms:** does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)

Number	Initial Impressions	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Initial impressions of the library grounds are positive				x			
2	Initial impressions of the library buildings are positive				x			
3	Initial impressions of the library interiors are positive				x			
Number	General facility Security	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Duress buttons for staff						x	
2	Lockdown buttons for entrances/exits						x	
3	Designated safe rooms						x	
4	PA and other backup announcement system						x	
5	Minimum staffing levels are identified					x		
6	Access control monitoring system						x	
7	Staff areas have controlled access				x			
8	Contractors and vendors have monitored access (badges) and are briefed on safety protocols (weapons in buildings, etc)							x
9	Camera system / video monitoring and storage capability				x			

COMMENTS:

- * Cameras are unable to be monitored by security staff
- * The upstairs auditorium does not have restricted access. A low-cost option could be a small motion sensor across the middle of the stairs that alerts staff when someone is in that area however the elevator still has free access to that floor, leaving the upper floor unsecured and unmonitored.

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent Terms: does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)								
Number	General facility Security	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
10	Secondary exits are alarmed		x					
11	Information for emergency response is posted in staff areas							x
12	First aid kits / AEDs accessible				x			
13	Fire extinguishers serviceable, maintained, and signage posted			x				
14	Power fail emergency phone lines				x			
15	Area designated for EMS/media							x
<p>COMMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Signage for the fire extinguisher on the lower level is worn and unreadable. Needs replacing. ✓ A cell phone is always plugged in with critical numbers programmed in for power fail situations. ✓ ADA door has a beeper letting staff know if it's open. All secondary doors should have local alarms to let staff know if they are being opened or left ajar. The branch is small enough where an alarm would be audible to staff within the building. 								
Number	GROUNDS	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Signs direct approaching vehicles and pedestrians to appropriate entries to the library property.			x				
2	Entries to the library property are attractive and welcoming and indicate libraries name.				x			
3	Creates natural access.				x			
4	Entries to the library property can be easily monitored.		x					
5	Secondary pedestrian entries are secured during library hours.				x			
6	Secondary vehicular entries are secured during library hours.						x	
7	Bike racks are easily monitored and in good condition.				x			
8	Access to dumpster areas are controlled/eliminate hiding spots.			x				
9	Vegetation is well maintained (2' 6' rule) and does not cover lighting or block natural surveillance.		x					
10	Positive activity generators throughout.				x			
11	Shows ownership of the space (art, signage, territorial reinforcement in place)			x				
12	Complimentary use (multi-purposed to encourage activity, natural surveillance, and contact with people)			x				
13	Eliminates isolated areas.		x					
14	Entrapment areas are closed off during after-hours.		x					
15	Lighting is consistent, eliminates light trespass, and is protected from vandalism.							x
16	Pathways are illuminated to recognize people from 30 ft distance at night.							x
17	Grounds, equipment, and signs are well maintained.				x			
18	Landscaping elements do not allow easy access to roofs, windows, or other upper-level areas.				x			

FOUNDATIONS: continued

COMMENTS: * If possible, we recommend installing a subtle gated barrier across the south grassy (between the library and the Orca building) area to prevent people from cutting around the back of the library. Consider adding features in the south lawn to create positive activity.

* A note that some vegetation on the grounds is overgrown; keeping landscape very curated and maintained sends a message that the property is frequently monitored.

* #4 Entries to the library property can be easily monitored: there is a beeper at the back door, but no real ability to monitor (particularly if staff are occupied and helping someone else).

* Consider placing shielding over the east exterior light fixtures, or over the bulbs themselves, to redirect the light to the ground, utilizing more of the lights potential while preventing light trespass into the east neighbors.

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent **Terms:** does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)

Number	BOOK DROPS	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Book drop locations are clearly marked by signage, pavement, and curb treatments.			x				
2	Book drop areas are well lit.							x
3	Book drop areas are easily monitored.				x			
4	There is sufficient capacity in Book drop areas for the orderly movement of vehicles and people.					x		
5	There is sufficient capacity in the book drop itself for books. (long holidays where staff are unable to empty)							x

COMMENTS:

✓ The book drop is in a highly visible area to the public. Staff may not have a direct sightline to it but this may not be an issue. It is also located away from the actual building which is a good practice for terror mitigation/suspicious packages. It has clear signage on each side of the book drop including a picture for those who can't read English. The vegetation could be trimmed down a little and the tree is blocking it from being seen from the main street however this doesn't seem like it would be much of an issue.

Number	VEHICULAR ROUTES	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Vehicular travel routes are clearly marked.					x		
2	Vehicular travel routes are in good condition.				x			
3	There are traffic-calming measures on adjacent public streets that limit vehicular speeds at crossings.					x		
4	Delivery activities are orderly and do not interfere with normal library functions.							x

COMMENTS:

* Traffic calming: There are stop signs and crosswalks at nearby intersections

✓ There is a bike lane along Finnegan Way.

✓ There are no main roads adjacent to the library property.

✓ The road that leads into the parking lot is narrower than the Finnegan Way and makes vehicles slow down to navigate through the slight turns as they enter the parking lot. If speeding is an issue, a posted sign stating "slow", or a speed limit could be put along 12th St.

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent Terms: does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)								
Number	PARKING LOTS	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Parking lot entrances and exits are clearly marked.		x					
2	Parking areas are delineated for staff and visitors.						x	
3	All parking spaces are clearly marked.		x					
4	Parking lots are easily monitored / visible to adjacent buildings.			x				
5	Parking lots are in good condition.			x				
6	Parking lots are well lit.							x
7	There are no signs of vandalism in parking lots.					x		
8	Vehicular traffic flows in an orderly manner in and out of parking lots.							x
<p>* Unable to observe the parking lighting. Fairhaven is currently using Solar Street Lights.</p> <p>* Consider emphasizing ownership of the parking lot with a large sign over the entrance (that vehicles drive under). A celebrated entry for vehicles reinforces the concept of entering a library space, and the proper use for of the parking lot. (Currently there is a small sign at the entrance that reads, "Library Users Only" which may be easily missed.)</p> <p>* Restriping the parking lot lines could add to a sense of ownership.</p> <p>* If space allows, consider reserving a spot for a security vehicle. (When staff are responding to a call, response times can be greatly reduced if they have quick access to the building and do not have to search for a parking spot.)</p>								
Number	PATHWAYS/WAYFINDING	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	There is a wayfinding system, which includes signs; plant materials; and artwork, monuments, or other landmarks.		x					
2	Pedestrian crossings of adjacent public streets are clearly marked by signage, pavement treatment and/or curb treatment.				x			
3	Pedestrian pathways on library property are easily monitored.			x				
4	Pedestrian pathways on library property are in good condition,				x			
5	Pedestrian pathways on library property are well lit.							x
6	Pedestrian flows on library property are orderly.							x
7	There are pedestrian amenities such as seating and trash receptacles located along key pedestrian pathways.						x	
8	Pedestrian amenities are in good condition.						x	
9	Pedestrian pathways and gathering areas are easily monitored.				x			
<p>COMMENTS:</p> <p>* For wayfinding, a sign posted along Finnegan Way and 12th St could help direct folks towards the library.</p> <p>* Not a lot of windows facing the sidewalks, but the area is in a highly visible part of town. It doesn't appear there is lighting specifically for the sidewalks near the library. For safety, include lights along the pathways at a pedestrian level to identify people. This can send a safe and welcoming message to the public.</p> <p>*Consider how to repurpose the space by the ADA entrance. Is it possible to remove the bench and add large potted plants.</p> <p>*It appears there is an unnatural pathway through the west vegetation. If this was not on purpose, it may invite people to cut through and go around the exterior of the library.</p>								

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent Terms: does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)								
Number	EXTERIOR STAIRWELL	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Exterior stairs, balconies, ramps, and upper-level corridors are well lit.							x
2	Pedestrian flows are orderly.			x				
3	Exterior stairs do not create hiding or hard-to-see areas.			x				
4	Exterior stairs, balconies, ramps, and open upper-level corridors are visible from windows or doors of the library buildings, parking lots and/or other activity areas.			x				
<p>COMMENTS:</p> <p>* Lower trafficked branch, layout and narrow hallways present a lower risk.</p> <p>* Low natural surveillance to the perimeter of the building. Cameras have been placed around the exterior but are not monitored.</p> <p>* Lower exit under main entrance has been problematic but has had remodeling done to resolve most of the issues. The area still provides some camping issues but not as bad as before.</p> <p>*Consider adding art or large potted plants by the lower door under the west entrance to remove the open space.</p>								
Number	MAIN ENTRANCE/LOBBY	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	The lobby is attractive, cheerful, and inviting.			x				
2	Entry security devices are unimposing.						x	
3	Pedestrian flows through entry security devices are orderly.						x	
4	The lobby is well lit.							x
5	The lobby is easily monitored.					x		
6	Signs provide directions to major areas, i.e. CHI, Teen, Holds, elevators, etc							x
7	Windows in the lobby area provides natural surveillance opportunities.			x				
8	Activity within the main floor is easily monitored.					x		
9	The lobby is in good condition.					x		
10	Visitors have distinctive and highly visible nametags.						x	
11	Security personnel wear distinctive clothing and have distinct, visible identification badges		x					
<p>COMMENTS:</p> <p>#11: comments about uniforms previously mentioned in the assessment.</p>								
Number	CORRIDORS/HALLWAYS	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Interior corridors are well lit.							x
2	Interior corridors are easily monitored.			x				
3	There are no hiding places.		x					
4	Pedestrian flows are orderly.							x
5	Interior corridors are of sufficient capacity to allow orderly movement.			x				
6	Interior corridors are free of obstacles that impede orderly pedestrian flow.					x		
7	Interior corridors are in good condition.				x			
<p>COMMENTS:</p> <p>* The hallway downstairs is narrow and could create issues with wheeled devices passing by patrons. However, it's not realistic to change this and probably a small issue.</p> <p>* A few congestion points for pedestrians. Narrow hallways and tight corners entering the main floor from the hallway.</p> <p>* The use of quarter dome mirrors upstairs could be replicated downstairs in tight areas.</p>								

Scale 1-unacceptable, 2-in need of improvement, 3-common, 4-good, 5-excellent **Terms:** does not exist (DNE) Unable to Observe (UTO)

Number	INTERIOR STAIRS / ELEVATORS	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Interior stairs and balconies are well lit.							x
2	Pedestrian flows are orderly.							x
3	Interior stairs do not create hiding or hard-to-see areas.		x					
4	Interior stairs and balconies are in good condition.				x			
5	Staff only elevators is limited to authorized individuals (badges etc)		x					

COMMENTS:

- * Lights were off during the walkthrough and unable to observe interior lighting.
- * Elevator does not restrict access to the auditorium upstairs and is not monitored.
- * The Main floor provides easy sightlines however the lower level and elevator is not monitored. Motion sensors with a subtle ding would alert staff of activity in an unmonitored area and would also let the individual know they're monitored.

Number	RESTROOMS	1	2	3	4	5	DNE	UTO
1	Multiple stall restrooms have open zigzag entries, rather than door systems.						x	
2	Restrooms with solid doors have vents to increase the opportunity for auditory surveillance.						x	
3	Restroom entries are easily viewed from other active areas.			x				
4	Restrooms are well lit.					x		
5	Restroom light controls are secured to prevent unauthorized access.							x
6	There are no signs of graffiti.					x		
7	There are no other signs of vandalism.					x		
8	Stall doors and locks are in good condition.					x		
9	Toilets, urinals, and lavatories are in good condition.					x		
10	The restroom ceiling treatment does not provide access to a hiding place.					x		
11	Restrooms are in good condition.					x		

COMMENTS:

- * Restrooms look very clean and in good working condition.
- * The restrooms on both levels can be designated as safe rooms. They have manual locks on the inside, the door opens into the room, and there are no windows on the ground floor.
- * The window on the upper restroom is elevated off ground level and can be used to signal for help or escape out of.
- * The window is also frosted and able to block visibility into the room.
- * The restroom upstairs has a decent sightline. The restroom downstairs is much more isolated.
- * Recently installed Verkada sensors have increased awareness of restroom activities.



Winter 2024-2025 Impacts of Weather and Shelters on Bellingham Public Library

Bellingham Public Library recognizes an urgent need in our community for additional day shelter spaces. During the cold season, the Bellingham Central Library sees an increase in visitation and length of stays. During winter 2025, in particular, the Library has seen an increase in the number of people who are needing a place to get out of the rain, snow, or cold during the day. In particular, inclement weather has a significant impact on the county's unhoused population. Without a place to find shelter throughout the day, many of these individuals come to the Library, the only free, indoor, daytime space available to adults over age 26, and open 7 days/week in Bellingham. When warm dry spaces are not available for unhoused individuals during the day and/or to sleep at night there is a corresponding increase in incident reports in the Library. Library data from Nov. 1, 2025 through Feb. 28, 2025 clearly shows that in addition to overnight shelter, the availability of daytime shelter dramatically decreases the number of rules of conduct incidents at the Library. Fewer incidents in the Library allows staff to focus on Library services, allows staff and patrons to feel safe, and improves the well-being of staff and unhoused patrons.

Data Gathering

The following data shows average daily BPL incident reports, inclement weather, and the availability of shelters grouped by week. Weather was given a daily score of 0-4 for each factor (rain, snow, and under 32 degrees) based on how many quarters of each day the inclement weather was present. Data was sourced from www.timeanddate.com: [Past Weather in Bellingham, Washington, USA — Yesterday or Further Back](#). Shelter data was sourced from [Winter Shelters for Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness | Whatcom County, WA - Official Website](#) as well as a direct request to Lighthouse Mission for their daytime shelter availability.

Data Patterns

Daily Incident Reports and Weather data (organized by week) are strongly correlated from the weeks of 11/03-01/11. There are some increases in Incident reports which may be accounted for by other factors:

- 11/03-11/23 increased Incident Reports were likely due to the closure of the E. Stuart Rd (Walmart) encampment .
- 11/24-11/30 and 12/22-12/28 increased Incident Reports may be due to the 2-day closures at BPL for Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

Marked deviations to this pattern are visible the weeks of 01/19-01/25, 02/02-02/08, and 02/09-02/22. This coincides with the increased availability of shelter options, including the Whatcom County Severe Weather Shelter and the day-time opening of the Lighthouse Mission during those weeks.

Conclusions

Library staff and our two behavioral health specialists from Lake Whatcom Center are diligent about providing people with information about available shelter options, and when those shelters are open. For most of the winter, there are very limited options for people seeking shelter inside during the day. When shelters, such as Lighthouse Mission, do offer daytime access during cold weather events, the impact is noticeable at the Library. Right now, the Central Library is providing a truly unsustainable level of daytime shelter needs.

November 2024-February 2025 - BPL Incident Reports, Adverse Weather Events, and Shelter Availability*



*All data is shown as daily averages for the weekly periods displayed on the graph