

**BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES**

**NOTICE OF MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
of TUESDAY, October 21, 2025, 3:30 p.m.**

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.**

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

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

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Call to order and introductions | 1 min |
| 2. Approve/modify agenda | 1 min |
| 3. Public comment
This time is set aside for members of the public to make comments.
Remarks will be limited to three minutes. | 3 min |
| 4. Consent agenda (see packet materials)
All matters listed on the consent agenda are considered routine and may be approved in a single motion. A Trustee may ask that an item be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications and FYI• Minutes: September 16, 2025: Regular Board Meeting• Library performance & activity measures: September 2025• Financial reports
Claims: September 2025
YTD report: September 2025
3rd Quarter Donation Report | 5 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) | 5 min |

Time check: 3:45

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 6. National Friends of Libraries Week, October 19-25, 2025 (see packet materials) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebecca Craven, Board Chair | 5 min |
| 7. Library Director review process draft discussion (see packet materials) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebecca Craven, Board Chair | 10 min |
| 8. Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebecca Judd, Director | 5 min |
| 9. 2026 Budget update (see packet materials) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebecca Judd, Director | 10 min |
| 10. Central Library Renovation update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebecca Judd, Director • Fundraising - Kristy Van Ness, Vice Chair | 5 min |
| 11. 3rd Quarter Action Plan report (see packet materials) | 5 min |
| Time check: 4:25 | |
| 12. Title: Justice Project Behavioral Health: Concepts and Visioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hannah Fisk, Special Projects Manager, Whatcom County Health & Community Services | 30 min |
| 13. New business | 3 min |
| 14. Agenda items for next meeting | 2 min |
| Time check: 5:00 | |
| 15. Adjourn | |

Accessibility:

The Bellingham Public Library Lecture 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, November 18, 2025 – 3:30 p.m.
Location: Lecture Room, Central Library, 210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, Washington



Home > News > Publisher News

Baker & Taylor Prepares Plan to Shut Down

By Jim Milliot | Oct 07, 2025

At a town hall meeting yesterday, Baker & Taylor owner and CEO Aman Kochar said that while he had hoped to find another way forward for the company after its acquisition deal with ReaderLink was called off, he now does not see a sustainable path to keep the library wholesaler in business.

As a result, B&T let go about 520 employees yesterday and plans to wind down the business by January. Employees who were laid off had their severance plans canceled as well. B&T had undergone some layoffs earlier this year, but recently had as many as 1,500 full-time and part-time employees.

A story in the *Shaw Local*, a business journal for Northern Illinois, said that of the 318 employees in the B&T distribution center in Momence, IL., 253 were let go on October 6. Sixty-two employees will remain until December 22 and a “post-wind down” group of three employees will be let go on Jan. 3.

Details of the closure were released yesterday through Illinois’s Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act. After citing the failed acquisition by ReaderLink, the WARN report stated that “despite Baker & Taylor’s subsequent efforts, it was unsuccessful in seeking a path to continue its business operations.”

As of yesterday, a thread on the r/Libraries subreddit was filled with B&T employees offering personal stories about being let go. A B&T spokesperson had no comment on the various reports; publishers and librarians have been frustrated by the lack of communication from B&T since the ReaderLink purchase was terminated.

It wasn’t clear Tuesday morning how the wind down will proceed in terms of B&T looking to sell off various parts of its business. Baker & Taylor Publisher Services, for example, has been seen as a particular attractive asset that could attract buyers.

A version of this article appeared in the 10/13/2025 issue of *Publishers Weekly* under the headline:

Cascadia Daily News

County weighing design, location for new behavioral care center tied to justice facility

Discussions of treatment options continue for project voters approved in 2023

Oct. 7, 2025 4:24 p.m.



This county-owned lot, pictured Sept. 8, on La Bounty Drive in Ferndale is set to be the location of the new Whatcom County Jail. ([Finn Wendt/Cascadia Daily News](#))

By [Annie Todd](#) Criminal Justice/Enterprise Reporter

As [designers start conceptualizing](#) what the new justice center will look like, Whatcom County leaders are weighing whether the behavioral care center should be located with the jail – or at a different location.

It's a delicate balancing act of deciding who does and who doesn't have access to treatment, if those accessing treatment will be in-custody or out-of-custody, and ultimately who pays for it.

Voters approved a 0.2% sales tax increase in 2023 to fund the jail and behavioral health center. The jail component of the plan will replace the aging facility in downtown Bellingham with [a trauma-informed carceral setting in Ferndale](#). The behavioral health center was sold to voters as a mental health and substance use treatment alternative. Officials planned to have the center co-located with the jail in Ferndale.

While the jail will have crisis care for inmates, the behavioral health center acts as a more intensive treatment service. Hannah Fisk, from Whatcom County Health and Community Services, said in late September at a council meeting the goals of the treatment center were to reduce unnecessary incarceration, provide more diversion options, and help those with mental health and substance abuse issues.

Should the behavioral health center be housed at the La Bounty site in Ferndale with the jail, inmates traditionally ineligible for release might be provided a legal pathway out if they complete treatment, Fisk said. Treatment is also completed at a higher level when it's in-custody.

But the county would foot the bill for treatment since it is not Medicaid reimbursable if the individual is in jail.

Fewer people would also have access, while the off-campus, out-of-custody option could be offered to community members across Whatcom County.

Should officials determine they want the behavioral health center off the jail campus, it will more than likely move to Division Street in Bellingham near the Anne Beacon Center for Hope, the county's crisis stabilization center.

The off-campus center would be Medicaid eligible. Those who had been released from jail could also opt in for treatment since the facility wouldn't be considered carceral.

The Whatcom County Prosecutor's Office supported the idea of an off-campus care center so long as the same services are offered to individuals in-custody.

But, moving the treatment facility to a different location from the jail poses its own challenges. Fisk warned treatment completion rates may suffer as a result.

"The initial completion rates may not be as high," she said, but over time are more effective.

Council member Ben Elenbaas asked Fisk if the workgroup had examined a hybrid option, calling it the "best of both worlds" for in- and out-of-custody patients.

"The community deserves the best outcome we can even if it's not the cheapest option," he said. "This is what people are screaming for."

Fisk said while the hybrid option of two different pre-trial diversion programs inside and outside the jail had been discussed, it wasn't possible because of the cost to establish and operate two in-patient treatment programs. But she said the idea was worth reconsidering based on who would be receiving treatment.

No major decisions will be made until later in the year. Final costs and facility capacities will also be determined at a later date.

Whatcom County residents will have the chance to learn more about the justice project during a town hall hosted by the county on Nov. 20.

This story was updated Oct. 8 at 1:37 p.m. with additional information. [Annie Todd](#) is CDN's criminal justice/enterprise reporter; reach her at annietodd@cascadiadaily.com; 360-922-3090 ext. 130.



POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

Bellingham's proposed 2026 budget has layoffs, service cuts and a new tax

By Robert Mittendorf

September 30, 2025 5:15 AM  Gift Article



Bellingham Mayor Kim Lund speaks to members of the Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce during the annual "State of the City and County" address in May. Robert Mittendorf *The Bellingham Herald*

 **Listen to this article**

Mayor Kim Lund's proposed 2026 budget cuts the equivalent of 30 full-time jobs, trims city services and urges the City Council to enact a new sales tax for public safety in an attempt to reduce a projected \$10 million deficit. In all, the \$388 million spending plan eliminates 40 total positions, many of which are vacant already as officials saw a fiscal crisis looming earlier this year, according to Lund's budget message to the City Council on Monday.

“Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the face,” Lund said Monday, quoting boxer Mike Tyson as she delivered her budget message.

A total of 12 layoffs are planned.

“The budget includes reductions across nearly all departments in the General Fund, including the Mayor’s Office, the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Parks and Recreation Department and the library,” Lund said. “I recommend this action with a heavy heart. Our employees are the most important asset of the city. Our employees are the city. But this action is necessary to ensure we can continue to deliver services to our community sustainably.”



In a screenshot from video, Mayor Kim Lund delivers her 2026 budget message to the City Council during a meeting of the Committee of the Whole on Monday, Sept. 29. City of Bellingham *Courtesy to The Bellingham Herald*

A public hearing on next year’s spending plan is scheduled when the City Council meets at 7 p.m. Monday, Oct. 6, at City Hall, 2010 Lottie St. The meeting will be broadcast live on the city’s You Tube channel.

“For members of our community, these staffing reductions will result in changes that may impact you,” Lund said in her budget message to the council.” While we seek to minimize impacts to public-facing services, the reductions will be felt in

reduced library hours, parks maintenance and walk-in services. We will be navigating how to do less, because there will be fewer people to do our work.”

City Council members got their first look at the 2026 budget in committee discussion Monday afternoon. The budget was scheduled for formal introduction Monday night, and it was posted online at the city’s website at 2 p.m.

A weekly series of City Council committee work sessions on the budget are scheduled for Mondays through Nov. 10. That’s where council members will examine proposed departmental budgets in detail.

In a broad overview of the budget, Deputy Administrator Forrest Longman said the biggest impacts include the library, which is losing four positions, the Fire Department, which is losing 6.4 positions, and the Parks and Recreation Department, which is losing 5.3 positions.

Lund said that she and all department heads are giving up their 3% cost of living allowance for 2026. “That was one small thing that we could do,” Lund said.

Read Next

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

Bellingham moves ahead with tax to fund public safety programs

September 17, 2025 10:46 AM

The 2026 budget assumes that the City Council will pass a sales tax of one-tenth of 1% earmarked for public safety. City Council members approved that measure unanimously on Sept. 15, but it requires a third and final vote to take effect.

Such a tax would cost Bellingham shoppers about 10 cents on a \$100 purchase, according to the city. It would raise about \$3.9 million for a range of public safety services in 2026, helping to plug an expected budget deficit of \$10 million next year.

The tax can be used for several programs that fall under the label of public safety, including law enforcement, domestic violence, public defenders, re-entry work for offenders and crime-reduction measures.

It will not allow the city to hire new police officers as some have claimed, Lund said.

“This \$4 million enables us to hold the line” and is “essential to our commitment for public safety,” Lund said.

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Robert Mittendorf *The Bellingham Herald*     360-756-2805

Robert Mittendorf covers civic issues, weather, traffic and how people are coping with the high cost of housing for The Bellingham Herald. A journalist since 1984, he's also a volunteer firefighter for South Whatcom Fire Authority.

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Cascadia Daily News

'Doing less with less people' — local governments brace for cutbacks

Declining revenue, higher costs and federal money gone put elected leaders in tough spot

Oct. 2, 2025 9:00 p.m.



City of Bellingham Mayor's Office presents the 2026 Proposed Budget to city council on Sept. 29. The budget calls for increasing taxes and cuts to services. (Image created through double exposure.) ([Isaac Stone Simonelli](#)/Cascadia Daily News)

By [Isaac Stone Simonelli](#)Enterprise/Investigations Reporter

City and county governments are in trouble: Revenue is declining, costs are increasing and community expectations continue to grow.

The City of Bellingham is facing a \$10 million deficit for 2026, while Whatcom County is also projecting shortfalls of at least \$4.9 million as expenditures are set to continue outpacing revenue.

The situation for the county and city is not unique. Across the state, structural imbalances are being unmasked, explained Eric Johnson, a partner with Columbia Policy Advisors and a former director of Washington State Association of Counties.

In recent years, strong revenue growth and more than \$2 trillion in federal money flowed into local communities through the Coronavirus Relief Fund and American Rescue Plan Act.

These massive injections of cash obscured some of the challenges local governments in the state were facing, Johnson explained.

Skagit County, which is facing its own budget crisis, chalks up its \$19 million deficit in the general fund for 2026 to higher operating and salary costs, flat revenues, changes to mandated services, and uncertainty with state and federal grant support.

“My budget is horrible for this year,” outgoing Skagit County Commissioner Lisa Janicki said on Sept. 30 in reference to needing to “trim” 20% of the general fund budget. “It is not an easy year.”



Bellingham Mayor Kim Lund listens to a presentation during a May city council meeting. The city is facing a \$10 million deficit for 2026. ([Finn Wendt/Cascadia Daily News](#))

Required by law to produce a balanced budget, local governments have been searching for ways to prioritize restricted funds for core services, cut costs and increase revenue.

“We had to make difficult choices to balance the budget through both increased taxes and cuts to services and staffing,” City of Bellingham Kim Lund told Cascadia Daily News on Sept. 29. “We’re going to learn a lot as we navigate doing less with less people.”

Whatcom County is also planning for “tougher times ahead,” Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu told CDN in an Oct. 2 statement. However, he said the county was “on a trajectory toward sustainability and good fiscal health.”

“I think we have reacted in a timely manner, and it looks like we will be able to avoid layoffs going into next year,” Sidhu said. “That said, we live in an unpredictable world, and it is increasingly difficult to speak about the future with any certainty.”

Revenue unraveling

Property and sales taxes are the bread-and-butter revenue for local governments in Washington. This mostly worked for governments until Initiative 747 passed in 2001.

The effort, which went through some legal hoops along the way, limited property tax increases by local governments to 1% per year, with new construction increasing the tax base. Previously, cities and counties were able to raise property taxes by as much as 6% a year. (Strong timber sales also once played a more important role in generating revenue for local districts.)

The 1% cap is unable to keep up with either population growth, which requires increased services; or inflation, which is estimated to be 2.9% this year, Johnson said.

“Even though we are collecting more dollars on a nominal basis, it just doesn’t go as far,” Whatcom County Deputy Executive Aly Pennucci told the county council during a Sept. 16 presentation on the budget.



Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu speaks in March 2024 during the grand opening of a senior affordable living complex. ([Finn Wendt/Cascadia Daily News](#))

The county is looking for additional boosts to revenue, including possibly increasing fees for services to cover the costs of the work being done.

Inflation’s impact on the government’s spending power is also playing out with sales taxes.

[The issue is further compounded in Bellingham](#) by flat or declining revenue.

This is not the first time the city has faced a budget crisis. One-term Bellingham Mayor Dan Pike took the helm at the start of the Great Recession in 2008.

He told CDN on Sept. 30 that his initial approach was to preserve programs and jobs, including jobs at nonprofit organizations the city relied on to provide services to the community. Nonetheless, those agencies saw a roughly 10% decline in city funding.

But the landscape is different than it was nearly 20 years ago, Pike said.

The federal government — a dedicated partner under President George W. Bush and then President Barack Obama — is now more “chaotic,” “unpredictable” and “unreliable,” Pike said, echoing the concerns raised in Skagit. On Oct. 1, the [federal government shut down](#) due to an inability to agree on a government funding package.

Additionally, he was working in a “zero inflation” environment, which meant when he asked his staff not to take raises and negotiated 0% raises with the unions, he was not asking them to lose purchasing power.

“That was one advantage we had that is not an advantage that Mayor Lund has,” Pike said.

Increasing taxes

In response to increasing costs, many local governments are eyeing a new [criminal justice sales tax](#). Bellingham City Council has already introduced an ordinance for the 0.1% public safety and criminal justice tax in 2026 but has yet to approve the increase. The tax is councilmatic, meaning it does not need voter approval.

Lynden, Ferndale and Whatcom County are also considering the tax measure.



Whatcom County Council meeting attendees clap in support of a public commenter who decried the potential tax hike at a November 2024 meeting at the Whatcom County Courthouse. ([Hailey Hoffman/Cascadia Daily News](#))

Barry Buchanan, the incumbent for Whatcom County Council Position A at-large, said he was opposed to councilmatic tax increases.

“I don’t like raising taxes on people,” he said, adding that such choices should often be put to the public in a vote.

Nonetheless, he voted in favor of increasing property taxes in November 2024.

Johnson noted that many local governments are looking for ways to generate more revenue, including increasing taxes, which is “not really popular with constituents” unless there is a clear plan of how that money will be spent.

Whatcom County and Bellingham voters have approved several levies and sales taxes over the years to provide services above and beyond basic government functions, such as affordable housing, greenways and behavioral health services.

Lund told CDN that those dedicated funds enable the city to offer an “extraordinarily high level of service” in certain arenas, despite the pressures on the general fund.



Bellingham voters have approved several levies and sales taxes over the years, such as the Greenways Program levy. Most recently, in 2022, the levy proposed a prioritization of climate resiliency, tree health and increasing green space in city limits. ([Hailey Hoffman/Cascadia Daily News](#))

Three county council members — Ben Elenbaas, Mark Stremmer and Tyler Byrd — have been vocal opponents of increasing taxes, voting against adopting the county’s 2025-26 biennial budget and the associated property tax increase on Nov. 19.

Stremmer said it had grown too much over the past decade, Byrd said county government could be streamlined and Elenbaas said the county “throws money away” on ineffective programs and initiatives.

Even with the property tax increase, county expenditures are outpacing revenue, Pennucci told council members almost 10 months later.

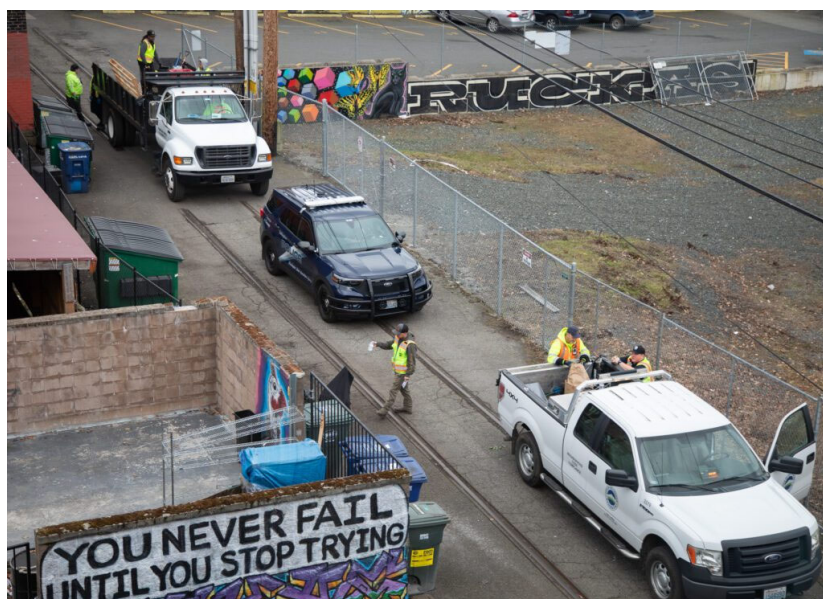
Graph after graph she presented looked like the elevation profiles from hikes with far too much downhill at the end.

“The choices for public policy initiatives of the Legislature do not always coincide with the fiscal realities,” Johnson noted.

Where are those millions of dollars going?

Whatcom County has an annual operating budget of roughly \$378 million. The City of Bellingham’s proposed budget for 2026 is \$543 million; in 2025, the adopted budget was \$548 million.

While people often associate local government with parks development, tiny home villages and other infrastructure, the truth is the entities are in the service industry, running everything from public safety and permitting, to fixing potholes and providing public defenders.



City of Bellingham Public Works and the Bellingham Police Department sweep through an alley between State Street and Railroad Avenue in March 2024. Public works and safety fall under the purview of the local governments. ([Hailey Hoffman/Cascadia Daily News](#))

Roughly 70% of revenue goes toward labor, Johnson explained. This includes wages, health care benefits, retirement benefits, and an assortment of other costs incurred to attract and retain staff. In many cases, unions fight for the best possible outcomes for their members during contract negotiations.

Baseline increases to these costs, such as maintaining health insurance policies and a 3% cost-of-living increase, are exceeding revenue growth.

“That’s been very problematic,” Johnson said.

For the 2025-2026 mid-biennium budget review, the county asked departments to run a low and high budget reduction exercise, which included cutting some unfilled positions.

The city is proposing to reduce costs by eliminating more than 40 jobs — most of which are vacant or frozen. The county has floated the idea of cutting at least 13 vacant full-time positions and freezing at least nine more.

City and county council candidates told CDN they opted for tightening budgets through attrition, which means not filling positions when an employee leaves. While the strategy does not result in immediate savings, it is one way to slowly downsize an organization with minimal pain or disruption.



The San Juan County courthouse in Friday Harbor. The county switched to a 32-hour workweek for employees in 2023. *(Photo courtesy of San Juan County)*

San Juan County took a more drastic measure in 2023 when it adopted a 32-hour work week “to maintain fiscal health in the face of rising wage and inflation pressure.”

“They basically could not afford ongoing cost-of-living adjustments to their employees,” explained Johnson, noting that the reduction ultimately reduced services in the community.

Andrew Reding, a progressive candidate for City Council Ward 6, said he was critical of Democrats always adding programs and staff without subtracting anything.

He told CDN he was not “afraid to suggest cuts,” even though “you always make some enemies when you do that.”

At the county level, District 2 candidate Maya Morales said she does not see a “ton of frivolous, wild, out-there programs to cut.”

Elizabeth Boyle, who is facing off against Morales, said she was worried about cuts to services for the most marginalized county communities.

Community expectations driving deficit

In addition to labor, constituent priorities are a significant budget driver, especially as residents look to local governments to buffer communities from the impacts of state and federal cuts.

This includes helping confront national issues from climate change and housing, to the fentanyl crisis and behavioral health needs.

In her 2025 budget, Lund prioritized funding for public safety, housing investments, climate action and support for internal services.

“City government, historically, has had a much more narrow focus,” said Hollie Huthman, City of Bellingham Ward 2 incumbent and current council president. “We were responsible for sewers and sidewalks and zoning and public safety ... our scope has expanded over the years, because the need has expanded.”

Lund said her goal in 2026 was to “hold the line.”

One way or another, the ledger must be balanced.

“We’re not going to solve everything in one biennium cycle,” Pennucci said. “This is going to require ongoing action for the next several years unless external factors change significantly.”

Isaac Stone Simonelli is CDN’s enterprise/investigations reporter; reach him at isaacsimonelli@cascadiadaily.com; 360-922-3090 ext. 127.

CASCADIA **DAILY** NEWS

What's the Deal With: Amending Table for Talk?

1990 art piece by Kay Kammerzell sits behind the downtown Bellingham Public Library

Sept. 28, 2025 9:00 p.m.



Amending table for talk, a piece of public art, sits behind the downtown branch of the Bellingham Public Library. ([Charlotte Alden](#)/Cascadia Daily News)

By [Charlotte Alden](#) General Assignment/Enterprise Reporter

Behind the downtown Bellingham Public Library sits a table that's split down the middle. But it's been stitched back together.

It's called "Amending Table for Talk," an art piece by Kay Kammerzell. She constructed the piece in 1990, based on an idea she had on a trip to Germany right after the Berlin Wall fell.

“The wall was still coming down, they were still dismantling it,” she said. “It was pretty intense and pretty joyful to be there and witness that.”

She said the table is meant to symbolize bringing two sides together to resolve conflict. The arrows on the table symbolize talking, she said.

The sculpture was originally put on the lawn as part of a rotating sculpture installation organized by the Bellingham Arts Commission. But after two years, the city and the commission approached Kammerzell about keeping the piece permanently. It’s been there ever since.

Visible from the Whatcom County Courthouse, Kammerzell said her cousin, who was a judge, told her he appreciated seeing it from his place of work, knowing the intention behind the piece: “Using our words and using communication is far better than having conflict that escalates into war or escalates into violence,” Kammerzell said.

Kammerzell lives in Hawaii now and no longer works as a full-time artist. She comes back to visit, though. She took a photo of her grandchildren sitting at the table.

“I hope that people that visit the library, or people that are visiting the courthouse, can come and sit there and think about how it symbolizes, to me, peace,” she said.

WTD is published online Mondays and in print Fridays. Have a suggestion for a "What's the Deal With?" inquiry? Email us at newstips@cascadiadaily.com.

[Charlotte Alden](#) is CDN's general assignment/enterprise reporter; reach her at charlottealden@cascadiadaily.com; 360-922-3090 ext. 123.



Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, September 16, 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, 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:	Katie Bray, Adult Services Librarian

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:31 p.m. by Chair, Rebecca Craven.

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

Public comment: No public comment.

Consent agenda: Kristy Van Ness moved to approve the August 19, 2025 Regular meeting minutes and the August 2025 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Shirin Deylami seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report:

- Nothing to report.

Board member reports:

- Nothing to report.

City Council liaison report:

- Hannah Stone reported that City Council will be reviewing the Comprehensive Plan over the next several months.

Friends of BPL report:

Carol Comeau reported:

- The Friends 3-day book sale is next week: Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.
- The Friends applied to be a recipient of a CoOp shopping day fundraiser.
- Congratulations to BPL for receiving the WDRC Peace Builder Award.

Library Director report:

Rebecca Judd reported:

- The draft Bellingham Plan is published on the Engage Bellingham website.
- Rebecca will attend the State Libraries Directors' Retreat Sept 25 and 26.

Policy Retirement – Action Item (see packet materials)

- Deborra Garrett moved to approve the retirement of Library policies 1.801 and 1.802. Shirin Deylami seconded. Motion carried.

Libby Level-Up Presentation

- Katie Bray provided a presentation on the logistics and cost of digital library materials. *(See attachment #1 at the end of the minutes).*
- Rebecca Craven asked a question about the Washington Digital Library Consortium (WDLC) budget and the 11% budget figure. Katie will investigate this question.
- Due to the overcharging of digital content, Shirin Deylami asked if it is possible to work together with other libraries to ban certain titles until the publishers agree to lower their prices. Katie responded that current contracts make this difficult and that price negotiations are between Overdrive and the publishers, not libraries and the publishers.
- Hannah Stone inquired if we will revisit having a BPL representative on the Executive Committee of the WDLC. Katie acknowledged the capacity constraints we are in right now – but that she and Bethany take turns going to the meetings to stay connected to decision-making and important conversations.

Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update

- Rebecca Judd reported that Phase 1 of Lee memorial Park cleanup is complete. The next phase will include planting of native species and trees.
- Katrina Buckman has been working on data gathering of Library incidents and will present to the board next month.

2026 Budget update

- The 2026 Budget will be released to City Council on September 29.

Central Library Renovation update

- Rebecca Craven moved to approve that the Library Board authorize the Library Director to execute a lease agreement with 4th Dimension Properties LLC for temporary program and meeting space at the Bellis Fair Mall at a cost of \$1500 per month plus \$100 per month for trash service during the period of 01/01/2026 – 06/30/2027. Water, sewer, natural gas, and

electricity are included in the lease amount. The landlord (mall management) retains the right to discontinue furnishing the utilities for any reason. Shirin Deylami seconded. Motion carried.

- Rebecca Judd reviewed the proposed Central Library renovation floor plan (*See attachment #2 at the end of the minutes*). Discussion meetings with the architects will kick off soon. At 30% detailed design we will do a cost estimate and may need to make revisions.

New Business:

- Nothing to report.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Behavior Health presentation from Hannah Fisk of Whatcom County Health Department
- Katrina Buckman presenting Library incident data.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting Tuesday, October 21, 2025 – Central Library Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Attachments:

- Attachment #1: Libby Level-Up Presentation
- Attachment #2: Central Library Renovation Floor Plan



1

AGENDA

- Libby, the Library, and You
- Digital Reading on the Rise
- Capitalism Strikes Again!
- What Are We Gonna Do About It?
- Q&A

A photograph of a person's hands holding a smartphone. The screen shows the Libby app interface, which includes a search bar, a list of books, and a "New Arrivals" section. The background of the slide is dark blue and purple with abstract circular patterns.

2

LIBBY, THE LIBRARY, AND YOU

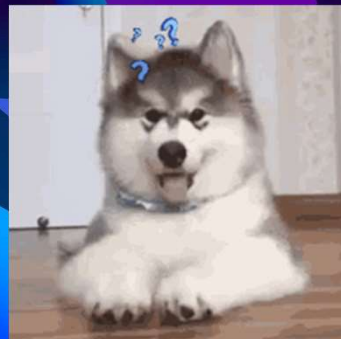
3

WHAT IS
LIBBY?

WHAT IS
OVERDRIVE?

WHAT IS
WASHINGTON
ANYTIME
LIBRARY?

WHAT IS
THE WDLC?



4



LIBBY IS ...

A branded content platform and app owned by Overdrive that the Bellingham Public Library uses to provide ebooks, eaudiobooks, and emagazines.

5



OVERDRIVE IS...

A vendor that provides a digital platform, Libby, and purchasable content along with backend support.
This is our only ebook and eaudiobook vendor.

They also own Kanopy.

6



WASHINGTON ANYTIME LIBRARY IS ...

A digital library provided by a consortium of 43 Washington libraries that serves a combined population of 860,632. It can be accessed by using Libby. It was created in 2008.

7



THE WDLC IS ...

The Washington Digital Library Consortium is the official name and governing body of the 43 libraries that contribute to the Washington Anytime Library. The Executive Advisory Committee makes high level decisions while day-to-day operations are managed by Washington State Library. All major decisions are voted on by member libraries.

8



HOW DO WE FIT IN?

Bellingham Public Library, like all member libraries:

- Pays a yearly platform fee
- Agrees to spend a certain monetary amount on new content each year
- Both figures are based on our service population

9



TELL ME MORE

Bellingham Public Library, like some member libraries:

- Has two OverDrive Market Accounts
 - One is the consortium account where we buy new books and requests
 - The other is our Advantage account where we buy additional copies that only BPL users can access
- Routinely spends more than is required to be a part of the consortium

10

JUST GIVE ME THE STATS, BABY

In 2025, Bellingham Public Library

- Had a base population of 95,960 people (based on 2023 numbers)
- We agreed to buy \$17,981.73 worth of materials for the consortium base on our current allocation percentage of 12% for 2025
 - In 2024, we spent more than the required amount – by 265%
- Our Advantage Fund is \$68,818.77 for added copies for only BPL patrons
- We also pay:
 - A platform fee of \$1,355.72
 - A magazine package fee of \$6,213.69

11

SELECTION CABAL

Currently, these librarians select digital materials:

- Suzanne, Adult Nonfiction
- Katie, Adult Fiction
- Jennifer, All Teen
- Bethany, All Children, CPC titles, Programmatic Support

12

DIGITAL READING ON THE RISE

13

BOOKS, BOOKS, AND MORE BOOKS

- At the beginning of 2024, WAL had:
 - 80,137 unique titles
 - 157,738 copies of said titles
- Circulation has been steady increasing
 - It increased by 15.28% in 2024
 - BPL has seen a 0.15% increase so far in 2025

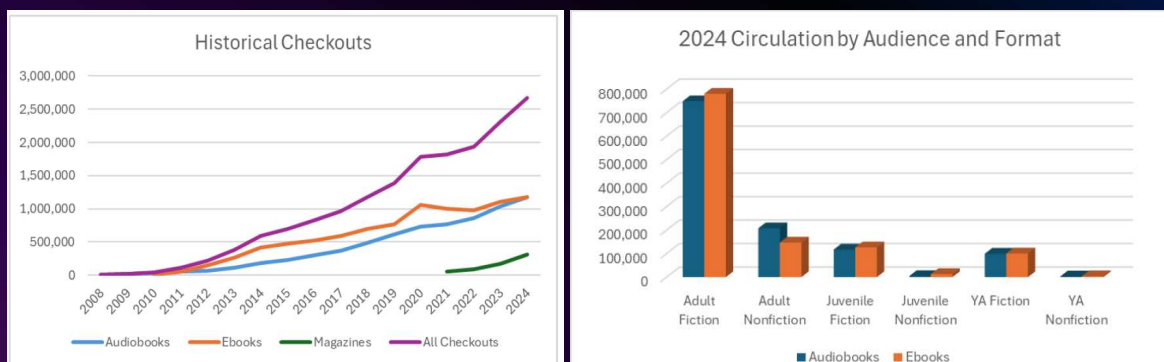


14

Historical Overview of Checkouts					
Year	Audiobooks	Ebooks	Magazines	All Checkouts	Percent Increase
2024	1,181,055	1,172,314	315,245	2,668,614	15.28%
2023	1,040,030	1,101,440	173,412	2,314,882	19.69%
2022	860,762	978,725	94,519	1,934,006	6.57%
2021	765,310	999,280	50,129	1,814,719	1.97%
2020	726,281	1,053,447		1,779,728	28.92%
2019	612,089	768,370		1,380,459	16.82%
2018	488,804	692,920		1,181,724	22.48%
2017	372,060	592,786		964,846	16.87%
2016	300,823	524,764		825,587	18.76%
2015	225,930	469,259		695,189	17.13%
2014	177,786	415,753		593,539	56.74%
2013	111,787	266,884		378,671	75.43%
2012	70,678	145,169		215,847	99.70%
2011	52,660	55,426		108,086	161.45%
2010	33,497	7,844		41,341	104.75%
2009	20,191			20,191	125.90%
2008	8,938			8,938	

15

CHARTS, CHARTS, AND MORE CHARTS



16



WHY ARE DIGITAL
BOOKS SO POPULAR?

17



THEY ARE
CONVENIENT AND
EASY

18

CAPITALISM STRIKES AGAIN!

19

EVERY SUCCESS COMES WITH A COST

- Expensive
- Inability to 'own' most digital books outright
- Lack of simultaneous use options
- Inconsistent licensing and pricing
- Long wait times
- Digital Divide
- Lack of secondary market
- Inability to share books with other libraries and platforms
- Not well-regulated
- Poor reporting and maintenance
- Lack of access to publisher exclusives

20

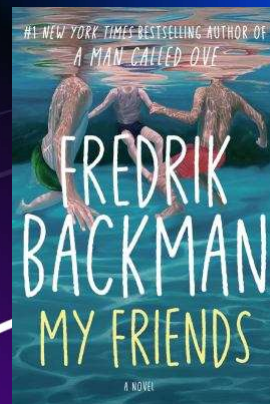
THE PRICE IS WHAT?!

COMPARING COSTS BETWEEN PHYSICAL
AND DIGITAL EDITIONS

21

MY FRIENDS

By Fredrick Backman



22

MY FRIENDS

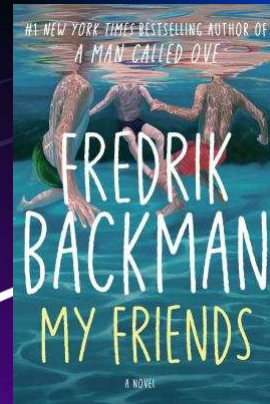
By Fredrik Backman

Hardback: \$16.94 (\$29.99)

Audiobook: \$44.99

eBook: \$59.99 for 24 months of use

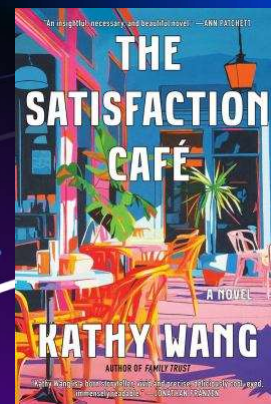
eAudiobook: \$84.99 24 months of use



23

THE SATISFACTION CAFE

By Kathy Wang



24

THE SATISFACTION CAFÉ

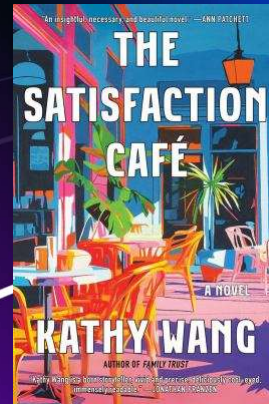
By Kathy Wang

Hardback: \$16.38 (\$28.99)

Audiobook: \$63.99

eBook: \$59.99 for 24 months of use

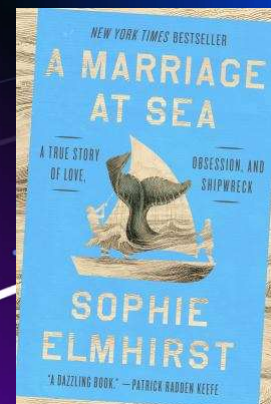
eAudiobook: \$84.99 24 months of use



25

A MARRIAGE AT SEA

By Sophie Elmhirst



26

A MARRIAGE AT SEA

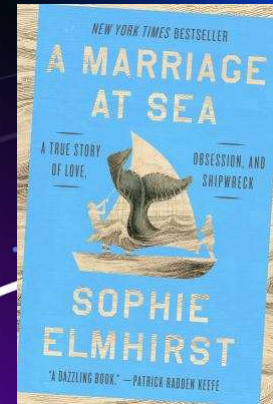
By Sophie Elmhirst

Hardback: \$15.82 (\$28.00)

Audiobook: N/A

eBook: \$27.50 /12 mons or
\$55.00/24 mons

eAudiobook: \$57 oc/ou or
\$28.50/12 mons



27

PRICING OVERVIEW

- 100 Simultaneous Uses
- OC/OU (One Copy/One User)
- 24 months
- 12 months
- 26 check-outs
- CPC (Cost per Circ)



PRICE



28

WHY SO EXPENSIVE?

- A. 'New' format that is not yet well-regulated by law
- B. Publishing is dominated five major publishers ... and Amazon
- C. Lack of competitive ebook platforms
- D. An old-fashioned cash grab
- E. All of the above



29

29

WHAT ARE WE GONNA
DO ABOUT IT?

30

ADVOCACY

1. Informing the public and our legislators about the costs of digital books
2. Working with other libraries, organizations, and our representatives to start regulating the digital market in order to negotiate and standardize pricing
3. Working with smaller publishers to add content to Overdrive
4. Organizing and protesting against the 'Big 5' publishers
 - a. Simon & Schuster
 - b. Penguin Random House
 - c. Macmillan Publishers
 - d. Hachette Book Group
 - e. HarperCollins Publishers

31

LOCAL ADVOCACY

Carmi Parker, ILS Administrator for WCLS, leads both the local and national ebook advocacy efforts.

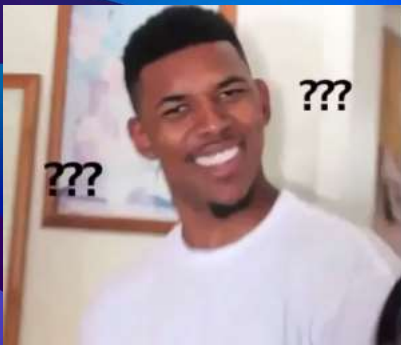


32

PALACE PROJECT

- An alternative ebook platform and marketplace
- Allows libraries to pull purchased content from other sources like Amazon and Overdrive
- Is the result of working partnership between:
 - Digital Public Library of America
 - Lysris
 - Many library systems and state libraries, like the Washington State Library

33



Q & A

QUESTIONS!

ASK NOW!

34

34

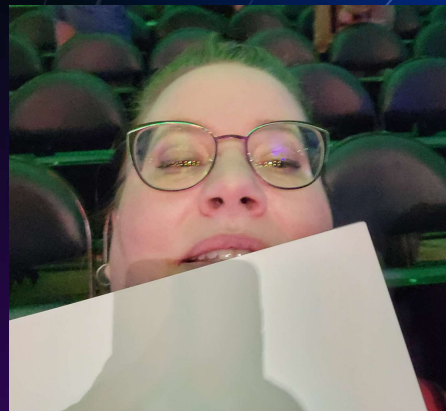
RESOURCES

- 'Carmi Parker, Movers & Shakers 2021 – Advocates': <https://www.libraryjournal.com/story/carmi-parker-movers-shakers-2021%E2%80%93advocates>
- Libby: <https://libbyapp.com/library/anytime>
- 'The State of Digital Content in Public Libraries': <https://www.infotoday.com/cilmag/jun24/Blackwell-Parker-2024-The-State-of-Digital-Content-in-Public-Libraries.shtml>
- WDLC 2024 Annual Report: https://washstatelib.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=75388783
- WDLC LibGuide: <https://washstatelib.libguides.com/WDLC>

35

THANK YOU

Katie Bray
Adult Services Librarian
Bellingham Public Library
360-778-7230
knbray@cob.org



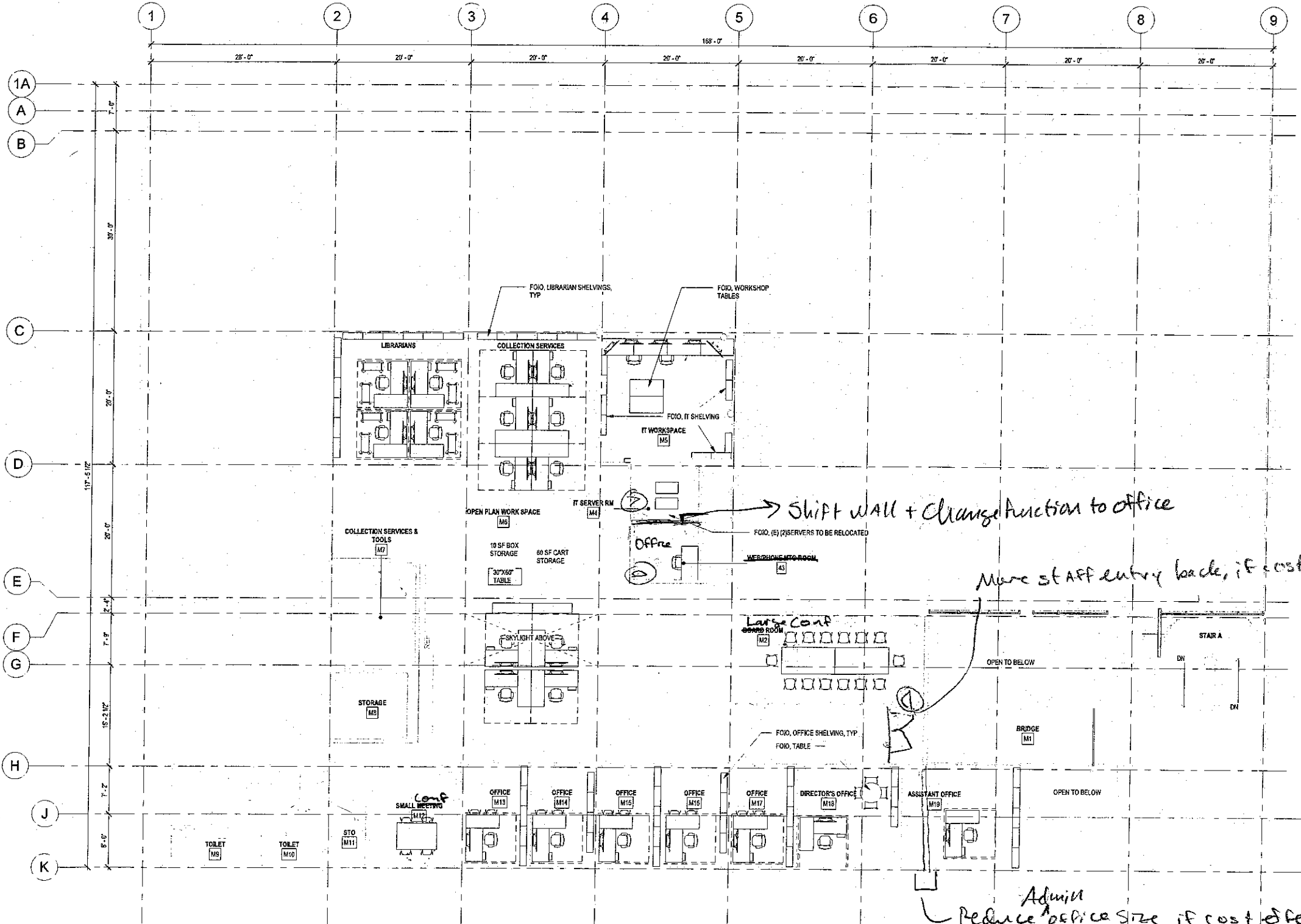
36

GENERAL FFE & SHELVING PLAN NOTES

- 1. ALL LIBRARY SHELVING TO BE PROVIDED BY OWNER, AND IS EXISTING TO BE REUSED.
- 2. ALL MOVEABLE FURNITURE TO BE PROVIDED AND INSTALLED BY FURNITURE VENDOR. TARGETED PIECES TO BE SALVAGED. FURNITURE: SALVAGE SCOPE TO BE COORDINATED W/ OWNER
- 3. ALL BUILT-IN CASEWORK AND BUILDING FINISHES ARE WITHIN PROJECT SCOPE.

MILLER HULL

The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP
Architecture and Planning
Folsom Building
71 Columbia, Sixth Floor
Seattle, WA 98104
Phone: 206.682.6837
Contact Name



NOT FOR
CONSTRUCTION

BELLINGHAM
CENTRAL
LIBRARY

210 CENTRAL AVE,
BELLINGHAM, WA 98225

SUBMITTAL

100%
SCHEMATIC
DESIGN

MARCH 25, 2024

REVISIONS

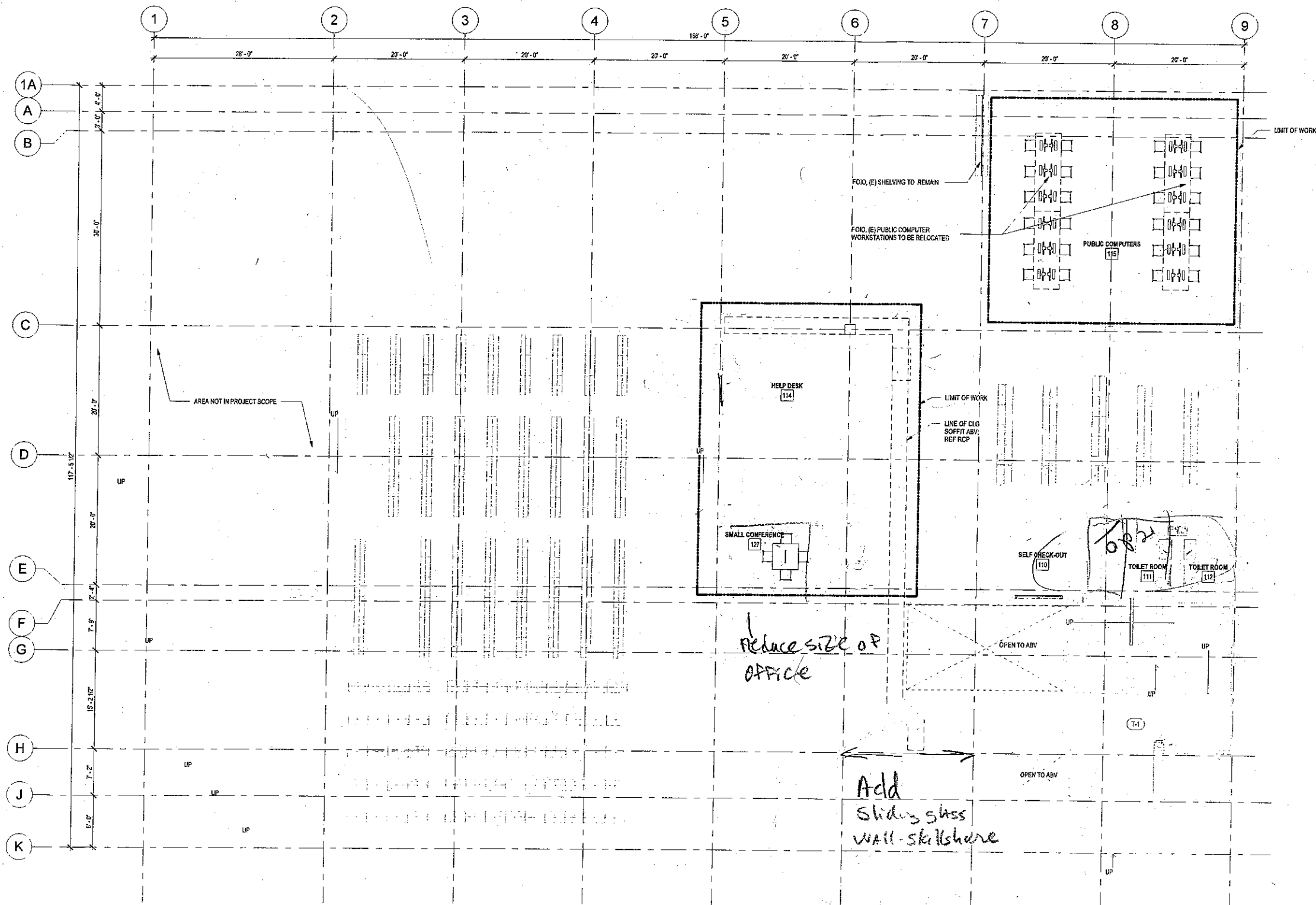
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Checked: MP
MJH Proj No.: A23.0156.00
Issue Date: 03/25/24

SHEET
FIRST FLOOR
MEZZANINE - FFE
& SHELVING PLAN
A145

1 FIRST FLOOR MEZZANINE - FFE & SHELVING PLAN
A145 1/8" = 1'-0"

2108 P



1 FIRST FLOOR - FFE & SHELVING PLAN
A135 1/8" = 1'-0"

GENERAL FFE & SHELVING PLAN NOTES

1. ALL LIBRARY SHELVING TO BE PROVIDED BY OWNER, AND IS EXISTING TO BE RE-USED.
2. ALL MOVEABLE FURNITURE TO BE PROVIDED AND INSTALLED BY FURNITURE VENDOR. TARGETED PIECES TO BE SALVAGED. FURNITURE SALVAGE SCOPE TO BE COORDINATED W/ OWNER.
3. ALL BUILT-IN CASEWORK AND BUILDING FINISHES ARE WITHIN PROJECT SCOPE.

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STAMP

NOT FOR
CONSTRUCTION

BELLINGHAM CENTRAL LIBRARY

210 CENTRAL AVE,
BELLINGHAM, WA 98225

SUBMITTAL

100% SCHEMATIC DESIGN

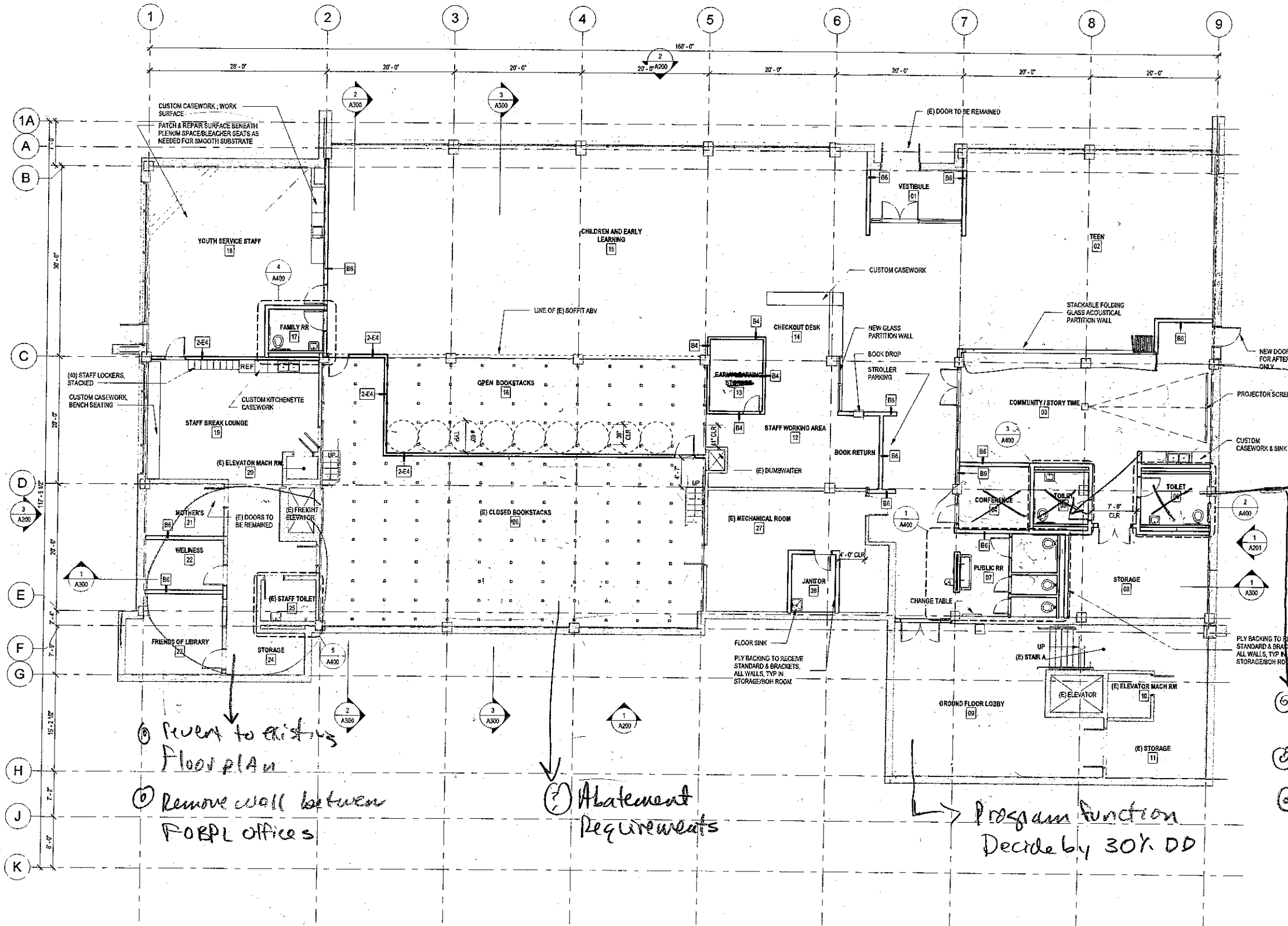
MARCH 25, 2024

REVISIONS

No.	Description	Date
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Drawn: CF
Checked: MP
M/H Proj No.: A23.0156.00
Issue Date: 03/25/24

FIRST FLOOR - FFE & SHELVING PLAN A135



- GENERAL FLOOR PLAN NOTES**
1. ALL FLOOR LEVELS DENOTE TOP OF STRUCTURAL SLAB WITH ALL APPLIED FINISHES ATOP, UNO
 2. SEE FINISH PLANS FOR NEW FLOOR FINISH TYPES AND LOCATIONS.
 3. COORDINATE WORK EXTENTS WITH OTHER DRAWINGS AND OTHER DISCIPLINES
 4. REFER TO SHEET A200 FOR INTERIOR PARTITION AND CEILING ASSEMBLY INFORMATION. ALL INTERIOR PARTITION TYPES ARE NOTED ON FLOOR PLANS OR ENLARGED FLOOR PLANS, WHERE OCCURS.
 5. CONTRACTOR TO VERIFY EXISTING CONDITIONS IN THE FIELD AND NOTIFY THE ARCHITECT IF EXISTING CONDITIONS VARY FROM THE DOCUMENTS AND THE DIMENSIONS SHOWN.
 6. PATCH & REPAIR CARPET WHERE (E) STACKS, CASEWORK, DESKS, AND OTHER BUILT-IN ELEMENTS ARE TO BE REMOVED AND RELOCATED, TYP
 7. ALL LIBRARY SHELVING TO BE PROVIDED BY OWNER, AND IS EXISTING TO BE RE-USED. SHELVING IS SHOWN HALFTONE FOR REFERENCE.

- FLOOR PLAN LEGEND**
- EXISTING TO REMAIN
 - NEW CONSTRUCTION
 - LINE OF WORK

- PARTITION TYPE KEY**
- 1-B4
- FRAMING SIZE DESIGNATION
PARTITION TYPE
FIRE RATING (WHERE OCCURS)
- PARTITION TYPE**
A: GWS STUD FURRING WALL (1-0 GWS)
B: GWS STUD WALL (1-1 GWS)
C: GWS STUD WALL (2-1 GWS)
D: GWS STUD WALL (2-2 GWS)
E: GWS STUD WALL (2-2 GWS)
F: STAGGERED STUD
G: CONCRETE SHAFT WALL
H: METAL STUD SHAFT WALL
- FRAMING SIZE DESIGNATION**
1: 7/8" HAT CHANNEL
2: 2-1/2" STUD
3: 3-1/2" STUD
4: 3-5/8" or 4" STUD (Per Project)
5: 5-1/2" STUD
6: 6" STUD
8: 8" STUD

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Seattle, WA, 98104
Phone: 206.682.6837
Contact: Name

STAMP
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Remove sliding wall
Add locking millwork for program storage
Consider clerestory windows above

- Revert to existing Floor plan
- Remove wall between FORPL offices
- Abatement Requirements

Program function
Decide by 30% DD

- Remove 2 restrooms + conference room
- Keep Storage Area
- Check restroom stall requirements for Lower Floor

1 GROUND FLOOR - FLOOR PLAN
A111 1/8" = 1'-0"

BELLINGHAM CENTRAL LIBRARY

210 CENTRAL AVE,
BELLINGHAM, WA 98225
SUBMITTAL

100% SCHEMATIC DESIGN

MARCH 25, 2024

REVISIONS

No.	Description	Date
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Drawn: CF
Checked: MP
M/H Proj No.: A23.0156.00
Issue Date: 03/25/24

SHEET

GROUND FLOOR - FLOOR PLAN A111

Bellingham Public Library - Performance & Activity Measures, 2025

	September		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	1,749	1,697	14,151	16,469	-14.07%
Electronic copies purchased by BPL	66	107	942	1,363	-30.89%
Physical copies withdrawn from the collection	(7,031)	(5,713)	(21,537)	(20,572)	4.69%
Total physical holdings			178,877	183,424	-2.48%
Total electronic holdings available to BPL			169,498	158,479	6.95%
Total Holdings (Physical and Electronic)			348,375	341,903	1.89%
Circulation - Number of items checked out or renewed; includes Interlibrary Loan and Outreach activity					
Central Library					
Adult	36,649	39,552	346,733	365,380	-5.10%
Youth	38,728	40,144	365,903	376,123	-2.72%
Sub-Total Central	75,377	79,696	712,636	741,503	-3.89%
Fairhaven Branch					
Adult	4,823	4,423	44,106	44,161	-0.12%
Youth	3,225	2,860	26,073	23,966	8.79%
Sub-Total Fairhaven	8,048	7,283	70,179	68,127	3.01%
Barkley Branch					
Adult	4,476	4,226	40,907	41,405	-1.20%
Youth	5,324	4,261	45,414	37,694	20.48%
Sub-Total Barkley	9,800	8,487	86,321	79,099	9.13%
Bellis Fair Branch					
Adult	1,170	1,004	12,209	10,834	12.69%
Youth	1,731	2,035	17,328	17,000	1.93%
Sub-Total Bellis Fair	2,901	3,039	29,537	27,834	6.12%
Bellingham Technical College					
Adult	22	20	330	304	8.55%
Youth	3	3	43	41	4.88%
Sub-Total BTC	25	23	373	345	8.12%
Whatcom Community College					
Adult	120	155	1,502	1,344	11.76%
Youth	24	26	216	247	-12.55%
Sub-Total WCC	144	181	1,718	1,591	7.98%
Western Washington University					
Adult	167	153	2,236	1,768	26.47%
Youth	49	29	605	621	-2.58%
Sub-Total WWU	216	182	2,841	2,389	18.92%
Sub-Total Physical	96,511	98,891	903,605	920,888	-1.88%
Online Services					
Kanopy	1,991	1,587	17,916	16,110	11.21%
WA Anytime Library Overdrive	39,995	38,837	366,026	363,473	0.70%
Overdrive Magazines	8,601	5,943	71,268	53,469	33.29%
Sub-Total Online	50,587	46,367	455,210	433,052	5.12%
Total Circulation	147,098	145,258	1,358,815	1,353,940	0.36%
Holds Activity					
Items placed on hold shelf	49,249	51,436	455,074	470,284	-3.23%
Services					
Persons Visiting - Number of persons counted as they enter the libraries					
Central Library	30,242	30,082	289,432	271,528	6.59%
Fairhaven Branch	3,604	3,091	29,642	28,117	5.42%
Barkley Branch	2,685	2,568	24,191	23,687	2.13%
Bellis Fair Branch	1,824	1,853	17,982	18,599	-3.32%
Total Persons Visiting	38,355	37,594	361,247	341,931	5.65%
Website Visits					
This count reflects number of visits to www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org	41,777	40,437	378,532	376,793	0.46%
Bibliocommons visits					
This count reflects number of visits to Bibliocommons	27,478	34,247	236,474	304,030	-22.22%
Total Website Visits	69,255	74,684	615,006	680,823	-9.67%
Computer Usage - Number of sessions					
Central Library					
Adult & Teen (30 terminals)	3,481	3,251	30,755	28,241	8.90%
Childrens (3 terminals)	54	86	847	686	23.47%
Fairhaven Branch (6 terminals)	257	255	2,137	2,160	-1.06%
Barkley Branch (4 terminals)	145	166	1,186	1,425	-16.77%
Bellis Fair Branch (4 terminals)	178	97	1,292	1,106	16.82%
Total Computer Usage	4,115	3,855	36,217	33,618	7.73%
New Borrowers Registered					
Central Library	2,443	1,402	7,138	6,369	12.07%
Fairhaven Branch	46	38	348	342	1.75%
Barkley Branch	38	25	265	279	-5.02%
Bellis Fair Branch	56	59	395	455	-13.19%
Total New Borrowers Registered	2,583	1,524	8,146	7,445	9.42%
Programs - Library sponsored or co-sponsored educational, recreational, or cultural programs					
Programs	110	74	969	767	26.34%
Attendees	1,900	2,083	22,297	22,013	1.29%
Volunteer Hours	726	904	3,902	4,335	-9.99%

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

SEPTEMBER 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 OCTOBER 21, 2025, IN ACCORDANCE WITH RCW 27.12.210 AND 27.12.240.

	VENDOR	AMOUNT
Materials, Equipment and Supplies		
Books; DVDs; supplies	Amazon	239.01
Books	Baker & Taylor	9,859.64
Books	Cavendish Square Books	186.03
DVDs, CDs, recorded books	Midwest Tape	1,381.96
Vehicle fuel	Nelson-Reisner Distributor	286.01
Office supplies	ODP Business Solutions	540.61
Copier paper; receipt paper	WCP Solutions	379.21
Bookshelves	Webstaurant Store	1,451.18
Lost Interlibrary loan	Western Washington University	90.00
Materials, Equipment & Supplies Sub Total		\$14,413.65
Services and Interfund Charges		
Barkley Branch cleaning	Action Cleaning	722.11
Hotspot service	AT&T	18.24
Preprocessing	Baker & Taylor	3,073.38
Pest management	BioBug	147.15
Natural gas service	Cascade Natural Gas	104.52
Banking & credit card fees	City of Bellingham Interfund	29.30
Computer replacement allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	20,635.92
Facilities allocation (Central & Fairhaven)	City of Bellingham Interfund	79,950.00
Fleet Services	City of Bellingham Interfund	1,510.00
IT Service allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	1,064.94
Postage	City of Bellingham Interfund	1,163.78
Qualified Energy Conservation Bond sinking fund	City of Bellingham Interfund	2,275.59
Radio Communications Allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	685.76
Risk Management	City of Bellingham Interfund	8,430.72
Technology replacement allocation	City of Bellingham Interfund	8,784.76
Telecom Services	City of Bellingham Interfund	3,167.64
Water/Sewer/SSW service (Central & Fairhaven)	City of Bellingham Interfund	1,250.34
Printing	Copy Source	97.01
Alarm system monitoring	Guardian Security	176.10
Graphic Design	Katrina Lyon Design	510.00
Copier leases and copies	Kelley Create	1,358.44
Preprocessing	Midwest Tape	186.77
Mobile hotspot	Mobilebeacon	1,320.00
eBooks, eAudiobooks	Overdrive Inc	1,728.62
Bellis Fair internet service	Pogozone Wireless	367.49

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

SEPTEMBER 2025 CLAIMS

Electricity service	Puget Sound Energy	3,902.09
Waste disposal service	Sanitary Service Company	1,402.56
Bellis Fair Branch Cleaning	Sealx	1,275.30
Microfische machine lease	Technology Unlimited	340.08
Borrower notices	Unique Management	1,323.40
Hotspot service	Verizon Wireless	1,374.65

Services and Interfund Charges Sub Total	\$148,376.66
--	--------------

Gift Fund

CDs	Amazon.com	1,358.95
Books	Baker & Taylor	675.43
Fairhaven Periodicals	EBSCO	2,527.39
Program speaker honorariums	Fred Meyer	155.00
Audiobooks	Midwest Tape	416.27
Hotspot service	Mobile Beacon	253.00
Anti-Racist digital media	Overdrive Inc	1,697.05
Children's materials	Playaway Products	1,928.47
Books	Village Books	193.10
Teen program prizes	Walmart	22.88
Bookshelves	Webstaurant Store	1,559.49
Event speaker down payment	Whatcom Sound	200.00

GIFT FUND OUTLAYS Sub Total	\$10,987.03
-----------------------------	-------------

Total General Fund claims 162,790.31

Total General Fund & Gift Fund claims 173,777.34

Library - Budget to Actual - General Fund

September 2025 75% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Grants	2,794	0		
Print and Copy Fees	14,385	15,000	615	96%
Lost, Damage & Non-resident Borrower Fees	7,705	16,100	8,395	48%
Fairhaven Auditorium Rental Fees		5,000	5,000	0%
Miscellaneous Revenues	788	0	(788)	
Total Revenue	25,673	36,100	10,427	71%
Expenses				
Salaries and Wages	2,563,362	3,369,234	805,872	76%
Personnel Benefits	1,049,321	1,368,283	318,962	77%
Physical Materials, Equipment and Supplies	181,440	307,932	126,492	59%
Services, Digital Materials and Interfund	2,003,432	2,672,160	668,728	75%
Total Expenditure	5,797,554	7,717,608	1,920,054	75%

Library - Budget to Actual - Gift Fund

September 2025 75% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Donations	92,600	150,000	57,400	62%
Total Revenue	92,600	150,000	57,400	62%
Expenses				
Gift Fund expenses	63,309	50,000	(13,309)	127%
Total Expenditure	63,309	50,000	(13,309)	127%

QUARTERLY DONATION REPORT for LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2025 - 3rd Quarter Donations to Library Gift Fund

Date	Received from:	Amount	Purpose:
9/3/2025	WCF	\$3,000.00	Fairhaven Materials
9/15/2025	First Christian Church Book Group	\$125.00	Book Club Kits
9/30/2025	Misc donations July-September	\$117.37	Unrestricted
TOTAL		<u>\$3,242.37</u>	

2025 - 3rd Quarter Donations to Library Funds at Whatcom Community Foundation

Date	Received from:	Amount	Fund
7/1/2025	Over 20 Inviduals	\$3,990.00	Central Library Renovation Fund
7/26/2025	Individual	\$25.00	Materials
8/28/2025	Individual	\$25.00	Materials
7/1/2025	Individual - \$15 Monthly	\$45.00	Renovation
7/1/2025	Individual - \$50 Monthly	\$150.00	Renovation
7/7/2025	Individual - \$10 Monthly	\$20.00	Unrestricted
7/8/2025	Individual - \$125 Monthly	\$375.00	Renovation
7/13/2025	Individual - \$25 Monthly	\$75.00	Unrestricted
7/15/2025	Individual - \$10 Monthly	\$20.00	Unrestricted
7/15/2025	Individual - \$50 Monthly	\$150.00	Library Giving Day 2024
TOTAL		<u>\$4,875.00</u>	

2025 - 3rd Quarter Gift Fund balances (as of 10/15/25)

<u>Whatcom Community Foundation</u>		
Bragg - Muldrow Endowment - Spendable portion		\$896,803.54
Capital (\$121,627 designated for Fairhaven Branch capital improvements)		\$300,272.89
Fairhaven Branch Materials		\$6,931.35
Materials		\$16,132.17
Unrestricted		\$93,236.64
Library Giving Day 2024 (Unrestricted)		\$21,706.85
Central Library Renovation Fund		<u>\$176,236.02</u>
	TOTAL	\$1,511,319.46
<u>Library Gift Fund</u>		
(Variety of designated funds including \$256,530.70 in WCF distributions)		<u>\$395,409.63</u>
	GRAND TOTAL	\$1,906,729.09
Designated Endowment Fund (Held at WCF, principal total)		\$79,879.82



DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR October 21, 2025

October has been a month marked by meaningful connection and professional growth, thanks to the success of Staff Learning Day! The day was a testament to the thoughtfulness, collaboration, and commitment of our team - offering staff time to reflect, share practices, and build skills together. Sincere thanks to Kate Dunphy, Staff Development Coordinator and the planning committee: Dani K, Siena, Dani S, Jennifer L, Jenni, and Miranda for their leadership and care in designing a day that truly supported staff learning and connection. Kate will be presenting to the Board in November to share more about the day. (Rebecca Judd, Library Director)



WELCOME & INCLUDE



Barkley Branch reconfigure: Barkley Branch has seen steady increases in the number of patrons wanting to pick up their holds at this location over the past several years, and our allocated hold shelf space had been long-outgrown. Given the branch's small footprint, it took some creativity to increase the amount of holds shelves to meet this need. Librarians took an in-depth look at all the collections that are normally kept on the shelf at Barkley and determined what is most used by the community. We purchased some new, portable units for the picture book collections which allowed us to rearrange the furniture and free up some fixed shelving. Some of the less-

browsed collections will no longer have shelf space at Barkley but continue to be available through the holds service. We hope that we achieved some balance between our priorities of ensuring that we have some materials available for patrons to browse while meeting the ever-increasing demand for holds pick up service. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

Winter Reading Challenge: New in 2026, BPL will present a "Winter Reading Challenge" for adults in January through March. A special activity card will be printed with adult programming funds from The Friends of the Bellingham Public Library. The challenge will officially kick off with a book talk in Skillshare by Katie Bray on Dec. 30, and it will wrap up with a drop-in celebration in Skillshare on Mar. 31. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Skillshare Update. Starting Nov. 20, BPL Collection Services Specialist Amy Lathrop will begin the following monthly session in the Skillshare space:

We've Got You Covered! Behind the Scenes at the Library Nov. 20, 3:30 – 5:30 pm
Ever wonder how library books survive hundreds of checkouts? Join us for a behind-the-scenes look at how Bellingham Public Library keeps books looking good and lasting longer. This demonstration offers a peek into the practical methods library technicians use every day to protect and extend the life of our circulating collection—not rare or archival materials, but the books you check out all the time!

(Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Public Services Staffing Update: Public Services Clerk Marissa Tavener will be leaving Bellingham Public Library after five years. Marissa started as a Library Assistant in 2020 and became a Clerk one year later in December 2021. She has participated in work groups, on projects, and in staff appreciation events. Marissa is respected and appreciated by colleagues and patrons. We are sad to see her leave, but happy for her as she takes the next steps in her life and career. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Security Staffing Update: While Security Supervisor Cam Birman is out on leave, I have been coordinating with Public Works, Bellingham Police Department, and Parks to approve payroll, increase late night and early evening police patrols, and maintain security coverage. Park Ambassador, Jewel Johnson, has been working at least 16 hours per week with the Security Team to cover shifts and provide back-up. She will continue to work hours in the Library until the end of the year, while we work to hire and fill a full-time Security and Information Attendant. The Security and Information Attendant position posted on Friday, October 17, 2025 and will be open for three weeks. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Operations Staffing Update: We received recent approval to fill one of our vacant 25-hour Library Assistant positions. Interest in this position is being solicited internally, within the Library Assistant team. We hope to have this position filled at the beginning of November and will then seek approval to fill the remaining 16 or 19-hour vacancies from the pool of qualified candidates that we established in early summer. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY

Outreach Services: On October 14 and 21, Library Assistants picked up the first quarterly rotating collection from nursing and assisted-living facilities and delivered the second quarterly collection. Response from the facilities about this modified Outreach Service has been positive. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Fiber-optic Work Impact to Barkley Branch: The impact to Barkley Branch of moving the interconnect point for the City's internal fiber-optic network to the new City Operations Building ended up being less than anticipated. Barkley was offline the morning of Sept. 22 from about 7 to 11:30 am, and we confirmed that all systems were running by 12:30. Doug and Paul had set-up the staff computers with temporary access to WiFi via a cellular hotspot, so staff were able to complete normal computing tasks, including check-out, while the branch was otherwise offline. Patron computing and other systems were offline for a time, but everything came back up without any trouble once the interconnect work on our fiber line was finished. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

ConnectED Student Accounts – Bellingham Public Schools: Jon McConnel worked with Bellingham Public Schools to upload the student accounts for the 2025-2026 school year. This collaboration is in its 7th year and continues to see strong use by students. Data from the past five school years has been collected in the chart below. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Count of B-STUDENT accounts	12,134	12,158	12,065	11,867	10,727
Number that have been used (to check out physical items or authentication):	1,674	2,260	3,008	2,108	1,572
Number that have checked out at least one physical item	77	252	223	289	231
Count of physical items checked out	290	856	866	1,086	863
Number of B-STU patrons with Lost Items	7	12	41	24	25
Count of Lost Items	9	16	50	30	32
Total Owed in Charges:	\$ 151.80	353.37	\$ 858.20	\$ 474.63	\$ 655.59
Number of unique users for ebooks and eaudiobooks (Overdrive/Libby)	956	1,174	1,255	1,054	869
Total ebook and eaudiobook checkouts (Overdrive/Libby)	12,976	12,769	21,437	25,586	23,087

ConnectED Student Accounts – Whatcom Intergenerational High School: We received a signed Memorandum of Understanding from Whatcom Intergenerational High School (WIHS) to establish ConnectED accounts for their students. The MOU is currently getting signatures at the City. When the MOU is fully signed, we will work with WIHS to transfer student data and establish accounts for their students. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

READ & LEARN

Baker & Taylor: Our book vendor, Baker & Taylor, announced they are ceasing operations by January. A failed acquisition by ReaderLink on September 26 was the final straw for the company. On October 6, they laid off over 500 employees at their warehouses, including at the warehouse in Momence, IL that supplies and processes our materials. This news in the book supplier landscape is devastating, but not surprising. We've had an extremely difficult year with Baker & Taylor, often not receiving stock for newly released titles and having extremely long lists of backordered titles. This long delay, often resulting in the need to cancel our orders and reorder elsewhere, caused significant additional workload and stress to selectors and the collection services team, and ultimately decreased timely service for new materials. We are currently ordering items unprocessed from Ingram, and are happy with our fulfillment service. However, because we do not have shelf-ready preprocessing setup, all processing is being done in-house by Collection Services Specialist Amy Lathrop, whose hours are not properly resourced for this volume of work. Jon McConnel and I, in collaboration with City Purchasing, are currently crafting a Request for Proposal (RFP) for shelf-ready materials vendor(s). We are working to release, score and award the RFP this fall/winter. We are hopeful to have a new vendor or vendors established for 2026 that will suit our ordering and shelf-ready pre-processing needs. A huge thank you to the selectors and the Collection Services team for their continued patience and flexibility. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)



Listen Deeply: Community Voices Film Fest: We are looking forward to honoring our local storytellers on Saturday, Nov. 1, 10 am – 12:30 pm at Hotel Leo in Downtown Bellingham. Registration for this free community event is at full capacity. It will also be recorded by BTV. Thanks to the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library, Connecting Community, and many collaborating organizations for making this event possible, as well as to the

planning committee, Hotel Leo, BTV and BPL staff for countless hours of preparation over the past year and a half. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Book Club Social: A full house is also registered for our Book Club Social on Saturday, Nov. 15, 10 am – noon at Hotel Leo in Downtown Bellingham to celebrate book club culture and joy. Special thanks to many partners including the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library and Village Books, as well as to the entire BPL Adult Programming team. Participants will meet local authors, gather new title suggestions, and capture ideas to enrich their book group gatherings. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

INFORM & INVOLVE

Social Media: The Library's post on Oct. 5 for Banned Books Week has had more than 35,000 views and 1,100 interactions on Facebook. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)



Pickford Partnership: Both original showings of the documentary [The Librarians](#) at The Pickford Film Center, scheduled for Oct. 6 and 18, sold out quickly with waiting lists. An encore presentation was added on Oct. 16. BPL staff tabled in the lobby of The Pickford on all three dates and had meaningful conversations with attendees before and after the film. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Indigenous Peoples Day: An estimated 1,000 people gathered at Lummi Nation School for a beautiful Indigenous Peoples Day program on Monday, Oct. 13. BPL participates in the planning of this important event as a member of the Community Consortium for Cultural Recognition. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)



THRIVE & GROW

Microsoft 365 - File Migration Plan: The migration of all Library department files from our local servers to the Microsoft cloud is set to occur on the evening of October 28. Files will be made read-only and then moved to designated SharePoint groups. The process should only take a few hours and files will be available again the following morning. Thank you to all staff who helped to prepare our documents for the transfer. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Roundup of Major ITSD Projects: In addition to the data migration project, The City's IT Services Department has several major projects underway to upgrade the systems they support for all City departments, outlined below. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

- **Phone System Replacement** – ITSD is making progress on its project to replace the City's existing phone system. One step is replacing the hardware that connects our internal phone system to the phone company. On the morning of Oct. 22 they're planning to migrate from the old hardware over to new hardware. A short outage of phone service is planned for early that morning which should not impact the Library's operations.
- **HR System Replacement** – Human Resources is in the midst of a project to migrate to a new HR system. Library Supervisors had a short introduction to the new software on Oct. 10. The current timeline calls for the new system, Workday, to go live in mid-June of 2026.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Judd

A Resolution Commending the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library October 2025

Whereas, the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library is an all-volunteer non-profit organization, dedicated to their mission of supporting and advocating for our library; and

Whereas, the Friends raise funds for library needs, sponsor programs for all ages, encourage community support for the library, and support literacy by making free reading materials available and offering inexpensive materials at regular book sales; and

Whereas, our Friends' long-time support of the Bellingham Public Library is an example of the vital role volunteers play in our community; and

Whereas, our Friends' dedication is a demonstration of their commitment to the library and the library's mission to connect our community with each other and the world; and

Whereas, our Friends provide funding for the Library's summer reading program, Whatcom READS, and all-community events such as the Listen Deeply Community Voices Film Fest and Book Club Social; and

Whereas, many improvements and enhancements to our library, including renovation upgrades, have only been possible because of the support provided by our Friends; and

Whereas, we join libraries across the nation in celebrating their strongest and most dedicated supporters -- their Friends organizations -- during National Friends of Libraries Week October 19-25, 2025 and throughout the year.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees joins the library staff and the Bellingham community to commend our Friends of the Bellingham Public Library and urges everyone to join in thanking the Friends for all they do.

Passed by Library Board action this 21st day of October, 2025.

Rebecca Craven, Chair

Kristy Van Ness, Vice-Chair

Kendra Bradford

Shirin Deylami

Deborra Garrett

Library Director Review Process Draft

The Policy and Procedures Subcommittee recommends the following process for the Library Director performance review. After a first year evaluation, we recommend that the Library Director be reviewed every 3-4 years as determined by the Board of Trustees.

Process:

1. Provide Director with self-evaluation form.
2. Ask director for a list of frequent contacts outside of library.
3. Provide survey questions to the Board for approval.
4. Send out survey to limited staff including all of the management team and librarians.
5. Interview of survey outside contacts (This is a question for us)
6. Director provides self-evaluation
7. Review survey data, self-evaluation and external surveys and interviews.
8. Subcommittee members will write the evaluation report.
9. Report will go to the entire Board and will be discussed in executive session.
10. Board approval of the evaluation
11. Library Director will receive report
12. Possible consultation between Library Director and Board members.



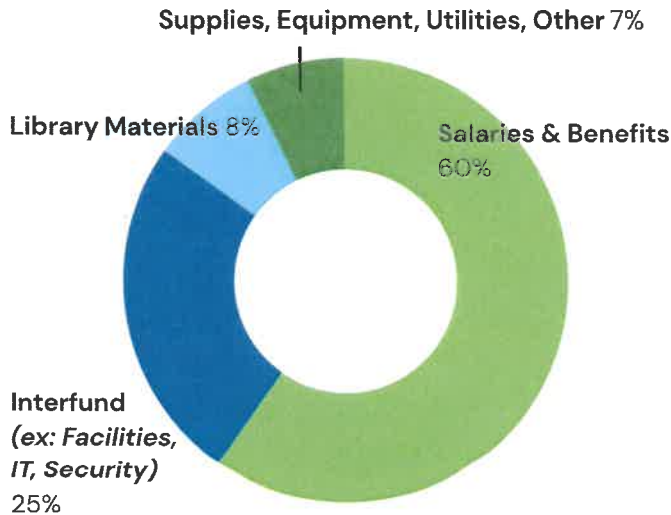
2026 PROPOSED BUDGET

Library

2026 Budget: \$10.4 million*

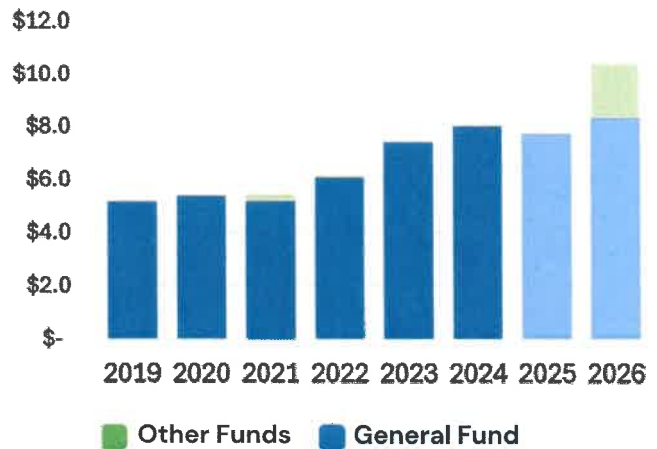
**Includes \$2M for capital improvements*

Total FTE: 50



Expenditures, 2019-2026

In millions of dollars



Actual expenditures for 2019-24. Data for 2025 & 2026 represent budgeted expenditures.

Budget Snapshot

- Elimination of 4 vacant positions (3.25 FTE) including Outreach Specialist II, Branch Specialist III, Public Services Clerk, and Library Assistant.
- Reduction in public open hours: the Library will operate six days a week, closing on Sundays.
- \$90,000 (13%) reduction in Library materials budget.
- \$2M investment through REET funding for next phase of Central Library renovation.

2026 Work Plan

- Sustain high circulation, visitor engagement
- Advance early literacy and school readiness through storytimes for children ages 0-5
- Deliver programs and events that bring our community together through a shared love of reading and learning
- Facilitate digital literacy and access through circulating WiFi hotspots, one-on-one tech help, and public computing with tech assistance at all Library locations
- Strengthen community well-being through inclusive spaces, collections, and programs that support connection & reduce isolation
- Complete design and begin construction on Phase 2 renovation of the Central Library
- Collaborate with the Whatcom Community Foundation to raise \$1.5 million in private funding to support the Central Library renovation

Visit cob.org/budget to learn more.

2025 Annual Action Plan**WELCOME & INCLUDE: We offer welcoming, safe places and experiences, where connections and understanding flourish.**

- Q1, Q2, **Q3** Focus on two key goals identified by Library staff:
 - Top internal goal: stronger advocacy for employee/staff safety and mental health
 - Top external goal: make the Library feel safe for everyone
- Q1, Q2 Support the transition of Security to a Citywide division
- Q1, Q2 Update Emergency Management plans and procedures for all Library locations, addressing fire, lethal threats, inclement weather, hazardous materials, and air quality

ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY: We connect people with opportunities and resources to solve problems and help them achieve their aspirations.

- Q1, Q2, **Q3** Evaluate service priorities and develop strategies to maximize community access to library services in a period of limited fiscal and staffing resources.
- Finalize the purchase and installation of the Barkley Community Drop Box to improve community accessibility
- Research options for improving print services for patrons and provide recommendations
- **Q3** Update the confidentiality policy to ensure clarity and alignment with best practices
- Q1, **Q3** Enhance website accessibility as part of a Citywide project

READ & LEARN: We inspire a lifetime of reading, learning, curiosity, and discovery.

- Q1, Q2, **Q3** Plan and host two large-scale events for adults focused on important community topics

INFORM & INVOLVE: We provide information and activities to stay abreast of community issues and events, fostering informed, active participation in civic life.

- Q3 Collaborate with the City planning team to develop programming for the mens' soccer World Cup, fostering community engagement through cultural events
- Deliver a National Library Week presentation to the City Council

THRIVE & GROW: We are a valued community partner and trusted city service, playing a central role in Bellingham life.

- Q1, Q2, Q3 Finalize the design and successfully bid the Central Library renovation project
- Q3 Establish a "Learning Hours" system to support ongoing staff education and professional development
- Q1 Complete annual performance reviews for all benefitted Library staff
- Q1, Q2, Q3 Develop and implement funding strategies focused on capital projects and planned giving, including an expanded Library Giving Day campaign to support the Children and Teen remodel
- Q3 Develop a schedule of Board training sessions, including a collaborative session with WCLS Trustees
- Track achievements from the 2020-2025 strategic plan and report on trends in preparation for 2026 strategic planning