

**BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES**

**NOTICE OF MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
of TUESDAY, November 18, 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.**

AGENDA **TIME (approx.)**

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

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

1. Call to order, introductions, and land acknowledgement review	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: October 21, 2025: Regular Board Meeting• Library performance & activity measures: October 2025• Financial reports Claims: October 2025 YTD report: October 2025	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. Staff Learning Day Presentation	20 min
• Kate Dunphy, Staff Development Coordinator	
7. Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update	20 min
• Incident and Behavioral Health data - Katrina Buckman; Head of Public Services (see packet materials)	
	Time check: 4:25
8. 2026 Budget update	10 min
• Rebecca Judd, Director	
9. Central Library Renovation update	10 min
• Rebecca Judd, Director	
• Fundraising - Kristy Van Ness, Vice Chair	
10. 2026 Holidays & Closures – Action Item (see packet materials)	2 min
Rebecca Judd, Director	
11. 2026 Meeting Schedule – Action Item (see packet materials)	1 min
Rebecca Judd, Director	
12. 2026 Rates & Fees – Action item (see packet materials)	2 min
Rebecca Judd, Director	
	Time check: 4:50
13. New business	3 min
14. Agenda items for next meeting	2 min
	Time check: 4:55
15. Adjourn	

Accessibility:

The Bellingham Public Library Lecture Room is ADA accessible. Elevator access to the lower 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, December 16, 2025 – 3:30 p.m.
Location: Lecture Room, Central Library, 210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, Washington

The Seattle Times

How Seattle, King County libraries get books into your hands

Nov. 2, 2025 at 6:00 am Updated Nov. 2, 2025 at 6:01 am

Tony Lauricella, automated materials handling system lead, dumps a tote of books into a singulator to be sorted at Seattle Public Library's Maintenance and Operations Center in Georgetown on Sept. 11. (Karen Ducey / The Seattle Times)



1 of 11 | Tony Lauricella, automated materials handling system lead, dumps a tote of books into a singulator to be sorted at Seattle Public Library's Maintenance and Operations Center in Georgetown on Sept. 11. (Karen Ducey / The Seattle Times)

By [Sara Jean Green](#)

Seattle Times staff reporter

Under a pitch-black sky, Jason Hayes and Chris Little loaded stacks of blue storage totes into box trucks parked outside a Georgetown warehouse that, up until a few years ago, housed luxury sports cars.

On this particular Tuesday, Hayes would drive to Rainier Beach, Columbia City, Beacon Hill and Leschi while Little made stops downtown and at seven sites in the northeast part of the city.

Hayes manages the Seattle Public Library's materials distribution and fleet services, coordinating drivers who fan out every day to deliver totes filled with books to 26 library branches. Little, a library driver for 28 years, said the "bread-and-butter" of his job is the mobile library, the unofficial 27th branch that holds pop-ups at Seattle Housing Authority buildings and housing complexes for seniors and people with disabilities.

"It's getting the library to people who can't get out," he said. "'It's like Christmas once a month' — that's what people literally say."

Hayes and Little are two of the 18 library employees who work out of the Maintenance and Operations Center, a nearly 20,000-square-foot industrial warehouse on Corson Avenue South. Known as the MOC, it serves as the Seattle Public Library's hidden hub, where an average of 10,000 books a day begin their journeys across the city, with 60% of them destined to fill online holds and the remainder returning to their home branches.

In an industrial park 25 miles to the east, off Interstate 90 in the tiny, unincorporated community of Preston, the King County Library System's distribution center handles three times the daily volume of books processed through Seattle's central sorter and serves 50 branches across a vast geography, from Skykomish to Algona.

A borrowing agreement between the Seattle and King County library systems — first signed in 1943 — means residents can borrow from both.

For library patrons, it can seem as if books magically appear on hold shelves in their neighborhood branches. But the infrastructure, technology and logistics involved in moving books — along with CDs, DVDs and mobile Wi-Fi hot spots — reflects the value placed on public libraries and is indicative of the Seattle area's literary culture. The two libraries' digital collections of audiobooks and e-books are attracting even more readers who prefer listening and scrolling to turning pages.

An abundance of books — and e-books

The Seattle Public Library and the King County Library System are beloved institutions with a combined collection of 6.8 million copies of physical and digital books. E-books and audiobooks are gaining in popularity but have yet to surpass demand for bound and printed copies.

Seattle Public Library, King County Library System (Fiona Martin / The Seattle Times)

The two library systems are part of a larger ecosystem, said Stesha Brandon, Seattle Public Library's literature and humanities program manager. Our region boasts numerous local authors and "a committed community of readers" who shop at local bookstores, attend readings, take part in programming, use libraries and support library levies, she said.

"It really is the kind of place where we kind of breathe literature," Brandon said. "Stories are part of our DNA. Maybe some cities feel it more through music or sports or other things, but I think here in Seattle, we definitely feel it through books."

"Tetris in slow motion"

Books used to be sorted and sent out to branches from the Central Library downtown, but when it came time to replace the automated sorting machine, operations were moved to Georgetown in summer 2023 for more space and easy access to Interstate 5. Though the biggest deliveries each day are still to and from the Central Library, the rest of the city is divided into four routes, with trucks hitting the streets between 3 and 5 a.m.

Drivers bring returned books back to the Georgetown facility. There, totes full of books go into a de-stacker, onto a conveyor belt and through a plastic curtain into “the automated materials handling room.” The totes get emptied at the far end of the cavernous space and books make their way under a sensor that “reads” the radio frequency ID tags inside the back covers.

On a recent Thursday, library technology officer Charles Wesley watched children’s books, a book about Aristotle, a poetry anthology and a travel guide to Sicily pass through the sensor.

“There’s a reason somebody is reading about Sicily — maybe they’re planning a trip,” Wesley said. “When you watch a stream of books go by, that’s somebody in the city who is thinking about that or interested in it.”

After passing through the sensor, which officially checks each book back into the library, the data on the tags then routes books onto the arms of the sorting machine. Each arm is divided into chutes and each of the 76 chutes is programmed with a destination branch, with books getting dropped into the blue totes.

Once full, a barcode on the side of the tote gets scanned, creating a manifest of all the books inside.

“It’s kind of like playing 20 consecutive games of Tetris in slow motion,” said Tony Lauricella, the automated materials handling system lead.

The filled totes get stacked against a wall before they’re moved into the staging area, ready to be loaded onto trucks.

At each library branch, staff unloads and scans the books to be reshelved or set aside for patrons with white slips of paper printed with partial names jutting from the pages. Patrons get alerted by email or can check their online accounts to see when a book they placed on hold is ready for pickup.

The feeling of getting a book after waiting weeks or months is “similar to getting a gift or card in the mail,” said Richard Counsil, regional manager for the Seattle Public Library’s Southeast region. “It’s a nice little dopamine rush.”

Meanwhile, in Preston

Things at the King County Library System’s distribution center in Preston operate in a similar fashion to Seattle, just at a larger scale and with older machinery that requires books to be unloaded onto a conveyor belt by hand.

The 20-year-old sorting machine, which processed 6.7 million books last year, is a decade past its life span. Staff often hunt for replacement parts on eBay and shutdowns cause 15 to 30 hours of delays each month, said Jen Baxter, the director of collection management services.

Baxter and her team are gearing up for the logistical challenge of swapping out the old sorter for a new \$5.2 million machine, built by Lyngsøe Systems Library Solutions, the same Danish company that manufactured the Seattle Public Library’s automated system.

Starting this month, the plan is to build out half of the modular sorter so books can still be processed in a leased space while the old sorter is disassembled. They will build the second half of the new system in the opened-up space, then move and join the first half up to it — a process expected to take until January.

The King County Library System — which serves 1.6 million people, has 2.7 million physical items and 1.2 million digital copies — set a record last year for digital borrowing. With more than 10 million checkouts, it's the second-highest digital circulating library in the country and fourth in the world.

Circulation numbers over the past 4 years

Tap to view circulation data by category.

Seattle Public Library, King County Library System (Fiona Martin / The Seattle Times)

Why we love to read

There are plenty of theories about why people in the Greater Seattle region love to read. It could be the rainy weather that makes curling up with a book and a cup of tea such a cozy proposition. It could be the concentration of university-educated residents, with more than half the people in King County over age 25 holding at least a bachelor's degree.

Tom Fay and Heidi Daniel think it goes deeper than that.

Fay, Seattle Public Library's chief librarian, and Daniel, executive director of the King County Library System, see a civically and socially engaged community that also values empowerment through learning. People here support literacy and free and equal access to information, they said.

"They see the library being an instrument to advance knowledge, to advancing social wellness and conditions that better the human condition," Fay said.

While nonfiction directly provides information that can be transformed into knowledge, fiction also provides "an entry point" to exploration of complex topics, he said, pointing to historical romances as an example.

"Fiction plays a role, both from a knowledge perspective but also just pure pleasure and recreation and escapism."

With a collection of 1.8 million physical copies of books and 1.1 million digital titles and other electronic items, Fay said library-card holders in Seattle check out 18 books every minute.

Daniel, who is originally from Michigan and worked in libraries in Oklahoma, Texas, Ohio and Maryland before moving here 19 months ago, said the Pacific Northwest has "a great tradition of writers," as well as a "tradition of being curious, intellectually probing deeper into issues, wanting to explore broad themes as well as really just enjoying a very good story."

"The thing that has struck me is just how incredibly invested this community is in both libraries," Daniel said. "I've been so impressed with how invested this community is in keeping the tradition of being a very literate community with high standards for culture and books."

Sara Jean Green: 206-515-5654 or sgreen@seattletimes.com. Sara Jean Green is a law and justice reporter at The Seattle Times who has spent the bulk of her 25-plus years at the newspaper covering crime and courts.

Bellingham library reducing - Bellingham Herald, The (WA) - October 22, 2025 - page 5A

October 22, 2025 | Bellingham Herald, The (WA) | Robert Mittendorf; Staff Writer | Page 5A

Bellingham Public Library will close on Sundays starting next year and will purchase fewer new books and other materials, part of cost-saving efforts as the city tries to close a \$10 million deficit going into 2026. The **library** also will be **reducing** staff.

Library Director Rebecca Judd announced the **cuts** during a meeting of the City Council's Committee of the Whole on Monday.

Reduced **hours** for 2026 affect the **library**'s main Central Avenue location as well as **its** Bellis Fair mall branch. The Barkley and Fairhaven branches already close Sundays.

Two full-time and two part-time positions are being left vacant, the equivalent of 3.25 employees, and the **library**'s materials acquisition **budget** is being trimmed by 13%, or \$90,000. Four jobs were moved to the Public Works Department as part of a reorganization of the **library**'s security team and are unrelated to the **budget**, **library** spokeswoman Annette Bagley said.

Judd said that trimming the four **hours** that the **library** was open Sundays makes the most sense and solves "structural staffing issues" caused by Sunday's half-day schedule.

"Eliminating that half day did make the most sense," Judd told the council.

Further **cuts** target the **library**'s outreach to long-term care and assisted-living facilities.

Programming is being preserved for young children and students in kindergarten through high school, including the story times for preschoolers and visits to schools, preschools and day-care centers, Judd said.

The **library**'s popular program to loan Wi-Fi hotspots for families without internet service will continue, along with the Whatcom Reads program.

Currently, the **library** is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Bellingham's library system is among the most popular in the state, with 360,000 visitors through September this year.

Patrons borrowed a total of 1.4 million books and other items from the **library** collection so far this year, Judd said.

More than half of all **Bellingham** residents have used their **library** card at least once in the past three years, and one in four **Bellingham** residents has used their **library** card in the last three months.

CITATION (AGLC STYLE)

Robert Mittendorf, Staff Writer, 'Bellingham library reducing its hours, cutting staff amid citywide budget cuts', *Bellingham Herald, The* (online), 22 Oct 2025 5A <<https://infoweb-newsbank-com.bpl-wcls.idm.oclc.org/apps/news/document-view?p=AWN&docref=news/1A3E61D3F2B8B9D8>>

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Cascadia Daily News

Bellingham library branches likely to close Sundays starting in January

City budget reductions mean staff cuts, fewer new titles for library department

Oct. 23, 2025 11:51 a.m.



The Central Library in downtown Bellingham is currently open seven days a week, but could start closing on Sundays in 2026 as the city weighs staff reductions to address a budget deficit. ([Imogene Eagan](#)/Cascadia Daily News)

By [Julia Tellman](#) Local News Reporter

Patrons will probably not be able to visit the Bellingham Public Library on Sundays starting in January, as the city-run department tightens its belt to address a \$10 million general fund deficit.

In her [budget message](#) to the Bellingham City Council on Sept. 29, Mayor Kim Lund hinted at reductions in hours at the Bellingham Public Library, and soon thereafter, the library confirmed in an Oct. 1 newsletter that this would likely mean Sunday closures.

Library director Rebecca Judd elaborated on the reductions in the department's \$10.4 million budget during a council meeting on Oct. 20. If the council adopts the proposed 2026 city budget, it

would mean the elimination of four vacant positions (the equivalent of 3.25 full-time employees) of the 50 FTEs in the library system.

Currently, only the Central Library downtown and the Bellis Fair branch are open from 1-5 p.m. on Sundays. Judd told the council that scheduling on Sundays is already a struggle due to the system's "skeletal crew" and that closing every branch on Sundays made the most sense when exploring ways to cut costs on personnel.

"Even if we are open six days a week instead of seven days a week, we want to make sure every time we open our doors that we're ready to offer excellent customer service and that the experience people have coming to the library is positive, welcoming, inclusive and safe," Judd said.

The library will likely also see a 13% reduction in its materials budget, meaning fewer new titles and longer waits for holds.

In 2025 to date, the library system has had more than 360,000 visitors and 1.4 million items circulated across its four locations, and one in four residents used their card in the last three months.

The city intends to preserve the library's popular community offerings such as bilingual storytime and mobile hotspots for people who need internet access. Bellingham will also invest \$2 million in real estate excise taxes into the [Central Library renovation project](#) next year.

Over the past five years, as homelessness, drug use and mental health needs have grown in the broader community, there has been an increase in behavioral health-related and substance use-related issues in the library. In January 2024, the library added a [behavioral health specialist](#) to staff. The specialist, who supplements weekly drop-ins by social service agencies, helps support people in need of resources or intervention.

Council member Hollie Huthman asked on Oct. 20 where the people with nowhere else to go would spend their Sundays with the library closed. Lund said that's been the subject of "hours of conversations" across different departments, but didn't have an answer.

This month, the library team received the 2025 Peace Builder Award for Public Service from the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center. The award celebrates organizations "whose dedication to community-building has created lasting, positive change throughout our neighborhoods, schools, and all of Whatcom County."

The council will continue to hold public hearings and work sessions on the budget before adopting it in December. The next hearing will be at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 3 at City Hall. Find more information on the city's revenue and expenditures at [cob.org/budget](#).

Find information on [library locations and hours here](#).

Julia Tellman writes about civic issues and anything else that happens to cross her desk; contact her at juliatellman@cascadiadaily.com.



OPINION



We need our libraries

By [Orlando JayAre](#) | October 10, 2025

Libraries are portals of possibilities. A representation of community and collective power. I didn't go to libraries growing up, no matter how much I wanted to be like Matilda and wheel back mounds of books on my little red wagon. No, my experience with libraries began when I moved to Seattle six years ago.

It wasn't until this year that I started to utilize more of their resources. How helpful it had been to pick up a COVID-19 test when grocery stores charged twenty to thirty dollars. How easy it was to access e-books with my e-reader, allowing me to save money in a city that feels too expensive to thrive in. The library, my realization further cemented in confidence, has always been for the people. Would you be stunned to know that right now as each day passes under the current presidential

administration public funding continues to be gutted? This is cutting off support for places, like libraries, that rely on that resource.

In early March, King5 reported that the institute of Museum and Library services began sending notices, informing the Washington State Library (WSL) that grants were in the process of being terminated by April 1. The notice would describe how reducing funds for institutions that weren't aligned with the current agencies (and president's executive order) would be underway. The annual budget for WSL is roughly \$12 million, with about \$3.9 million being cut. It may not seem like a big dent, but it does sever a great deal of potential libraries have when showing up for those in need.

On paper, the losses due to cuts can look like smaller disadvantages such as obtaining fewer e-books, fewer resources for research, technical disparities at rural areas library branches, shutdowns of prison and hospital libraries and staff cuts.

I'd also like to mention how librarians have been at the frontlines of the battle against book bans advocating against this form of censorship. According to the American Library Association (ALA), "groups and government entities that include elected officials, board members and administrators initiated 72% of demands to censor books in school and public libraries." The data further explains "821 attempts to censor library materials and services" while 2,452 unique titles are being challenged. Compared to 2023, there had been "1,247 attempts with 4,240 unique titles being challenged." The common pattern among these titles being challenged is that they primarily focus on LGBTQ+ and BIPOC subjects.

The book bans will continue, but so does the powerful voice of the local community. Reading, now more than ever, proves to be a vital source of information during this age of misinformation, not just to inform, but to find humanity even in the form of fictional reads.

Are you wondering what any one of us can do to support our libraries? While many are advocating for ways to gain local support (some of that coming from elections) there is also quick accessibility for folks, such as Libby, a free app where you're able to access e-books, digital audiobooks and magazines from your local branch. For other forms of media, library users can find themselves accessing free streaming through the Kanopy app, also linked through your branch.

Continuing to check out books and digital resources, attending events orchestrated by libraries and participating in local library campaigns (such as #LibraryWeekBingo challenge) continues to give you and the branches tremendous power. You can also ask your local branch about their needs. This may be in the form of donated books, school supplies, hygiene products and food.

Time and time again libraries have proven to be an institution for community, the basis of building a collective. Through inclement weather changes they have opened their doors to serve as safe shelters. They are spaces of gatherings that inspire conversation, build up ideas and allow

individuals to connect with one another. Libraries amplify the voices of community, ones that remain strong and true.

Orlando JayAre is a freelance writer attending the University of Washington. Read more of the realchangenews.org Oct. 8-14, 2025 issue.



WINTER READING CHALLENGE

FOR ADULTS

We think winter is the best time to cozy up with a good story.
Join the Bellingham Public Library in celebrating your joy of reading
(or listening) throughout the winter months, with this challenge.

- An old favorite _____
- Gives you cozy vibes _____
- Paired with a hot cup of... _____
- Has a film or TV adaptation _____
- Your favorite genre _____
- From your TBR pile _____
- Joy! _____
- A book from any Library display _____
- Read, listen to, or see Isabel Wilkerson _____
- Attend a Bellingham Public Library program _____
- Attend a Whatcom READS event _____
- Whatcom READS title *Solito* by Javier Zamora _____

Instructions:

1. Complete any three between January 1 and March 31.
2. Bring your completed activity card to the SkillShare area at the Bellingham Central Library on Tuesday, March 31, 4:00 – 5:45 pm to celebrate your success –or– turn in at any Bellingham Library location for a small prize. Have fun!



WINTER READING CHALLENGE

View Library programs and events at BellinghamPublicLibrary.org

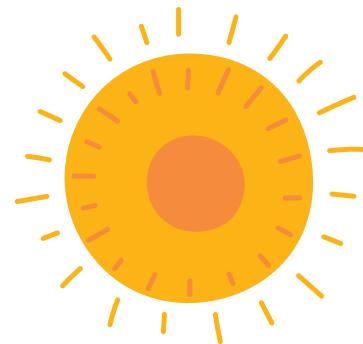
FEATURED EVENTS

Top Ten Book Lists: Welcome to Winter Reading

Tuesday, Dec. 30, 4:00 – 5:45 pm

[SkillShare Space, Central Library](#)

Adult Services Librarian Katie Bray will discuss the Library's favorite titles of 2025 and introduce our new Winter Reading Challenge for adults. Join us for a warm beverage and a time to get excited about winter reading.



Isabel Wilkerson: The Urgency of Radical Empathy*

Friday, Feb. 6, 7:30 pm

[Mount Baker Theatre](#)

Isabel Wilkerson is a nationally acclaimed Pulitzer Prize-winning writer and highly sought-after speaker, whose insightful work has changed how an entire country understands its history. A leading light in uncertain times, Wilkerson is the author of the critically acclaimed New York Times bestsellers *The Warmth of Other Suns* and *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*. This event will address current events and explore how both individuals and communities can support disenfranchised and marginalized communities and find hope in our shared humanity.



*Tickets required, visit [MountBakerTheatre.com](#)



Whatcom READS*

An Evening with Javier Zamora

Friday, Mar. 13, 7:00 pm

[Mount Baker Theatre](#)

Celebrate the 2026 Whatcom READS title, *Solito: A Memoir* by Javier Zamora, at Mt. Baker Theatre on Friday, March 13, 2026. The author will be present to talk about the book and sign copies. This event is free.

*Tickets Required. Details and more events at [WhatcomReads.org](#)

Top Ten Book Lists: Winter Reading Celebration

Tuesday, Mar. 31, 4:00 – 5:45 pm

[SkillShare Space, Central Library](#)

Bring your completed card to the SkillShare area at the Bellingham Central Library to celebrate the completion of the Winter Reading Challenge, enjoy a warm beverage, and collect your prize!



**Bellingham
Public Library**
bellinghampubliclibrary.org

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**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, October 21, 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, and Shirin Deylami
City Council Library Liaison:	Not present
Library Management Staff:	Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Katrina Buckman, Bethany Hoglund, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Madeline Rosenvinge
FOBPL Representative:	Carol Comeau, Friends of BPL Board Liaison
Guest Presenter:	Hannah Fisk, Whatcom County Health & Community Services

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:30 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: Kendra Bradford moved to approve the September 16, 2025 regular meeting minutes and the September 2025 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report:

- Nothing to report.

Board member reports:

- Nothing to report.

City Council liaison report:

- Not present.

Friends of BPL report:

Carol Comeau reported:

- The recent book sale raised over \$19,000. She thanked Library staff for their efforts in advertising and promoting the event.
- Ridwell will resume donating children's books in November.
- The next Friends board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19.

Library Director report:

Rebecca Judd reported:

- She expressed gratitude to the Pickford for partnering on the showing of *The Librarians*.
- She thanked Jon, Bethany, and the Collection Services team for their work on the Baker & Taylor closure transition. The Library is seeking a new vendor for books and preprocessing. Shirin Deylami inquired about the preprocessing requirements and whether it could be completed in-house. Bethany Hoglund explained that Baker & Taylor added barcodes, spine labels, and lamination, and the Collection Services team is not staffed to perform these tasks internally.
- The Bellingham Plan team reviewed the Community Well Being and Civic Practices portion of the plan with City Council, which is scheduled for final adoption on December 8.
- Kendra Bradford asked whether different topics would be featured in future "Behind the Scenes of the Library" SkillShare sessions. Annette Bagley noted that future topics may vary and will be reflected in the event title.

National Friends of Libraries Week, October 19-25, 2025:

Rebecca Craven noted that the Library is currently observing National Friends of the Library Week. In recognition of the Friends, she read the Board's Resolution Commending the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library. Kristy Van Ness moved to adopt the resolution, Shirin Deylami seconded, and the motion passed. All board members signed the resolution.

Library Director review process draft discussion:

Rebecca Craven explained that the policy committee, consisting of Shirin Deylami and Deborra Garrett, developed a draft review process for the Library Director included in the meeting packet. Rebecca distributed an updated version to trustees (*See attachment #1 at the end of the minutes*). Shirin Deylami asked Rebecca Judd whether anyone besides the Mayor and the Director of WCLS should be added as outside contacts for the survey. Carol Comeau suggested including the Friends President, and the group agreed. Kristy Van Ness moved to approve the document with the addition of the Mayor, WCLS representative, and the optional Friends representative to the list of outside contacts. Kendra Bradford seconded, and the motion carried.

Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update:

Rebecca Judd reported:

- Katrina Buckman will provide an update on incident statistics at the next meeting.
- Some individuals have been camping outside the front entrance to the Library, which blocks access to the book drop. Security staff, with assistance from the BPD Bike Patrol, have issued trespasses.

- A severe weather shelter will be available at Lutheran Community Services this winter on days that are colder than 32 degrees, with the possibility of a severe weather day shelter at the former Lighthouse Mission Drop-In Center. Kendra Bradford asked whether wildfire smoke or extreme heat would qualify as an emergency; Rebecca Judd clarified that currently, only winter emergencies are covered.

2026 Budget update:

Rebecca Judd reported that she presented the Library budget to City Council, where questions were raised regarding the proposed Sunday closure and Library services during renovation. During the evening Council meeting, Council President Holly Huthman mentioned the budget impacts to the Library, as well as positive personal anecdotes about the Library. The Sunday closure at Central and Bellis Fair branches will begin in December. Kendra Bradford asked whether alternatives to Sundays were suggested by Councilmembers; Rebecca Judd answered that Tuesdays were proposed by one Councilmember. Annette Bagley noted that since Bellis Fair and Fairhaven are already closed on Sundays, only two branches will be affected, rather than all four on any given day. Carol Comeau mentioned potential impacts on teens conducting research on Sundays and discussed mitigation strategies.

Central Library Renovation Update

Rebecca Judd reported:

- Scoping meetings with Miller Hull will be scheduled to review the schematic design and changes.
- The Bellis Fair license agreement for temporary space during the renovation is circulating for city signatures.
- Kristy Van Ness reported that Rachel Meyers will assist with renovation fundraising. Rachel is developing a marketing kit to ensure consistent fundraising messaging. The Library has met its \$100,000 fundraising match and additionally received a \$100,000 pledge from the Tucker Family Foundation. Bethany Hoglund shared information on the Tucker Family Foundation.

3rd Quarter Action Plan report (see packet materials)

Rebecca Judd reported:

- Progress is being made on the Barkley drop boxes, following Jennifer Vander Ploeg's contact with Talbot.
- Appreciation was extended to Annette Bagley and Bethany Hoglund for their work on the World Cup Committee.
- Staff Development Coordinator Kate Dunphy is designing a Learning Hours system for staff development.
- The Library plans to develop a bridge plan between the previous strategic planning effort and the next, focusing on time-sensitive issues such as updating the Level of Service standard for open hours.

Justice Project Behavioral Health: Concepts and Visioning Presentation

- Hannah Fisk and Chief Erickson provided a presentation on the planning and logistics of the Justice Project. *(See attachment #2 at the end of the minutes).*

- A Q&A session followed the presentation. A community engagement workshop is being held in Ferndale on Thursday, November 20 from 6-8pm. More information about this project can be found [here](#). All questions and feedback can be emailed to County Council council@co.whatcom.wa.us and the Executive's Office ssidhu@co.whatcom.wa.us.

New Business:

- Nothing to report.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Katrina Buckman presenting Library incident data.
- Staff Learning Day presentation from Kate Dunphy, Staff Development Coordinator.

Meeting adjourned at 5:29 p.m.

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

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

Library Director Review Process Draft

After a first year evaluation, the Director will be evaluated on a schedule determined by the Board, but no less frequently than every four years.

Process:

1. Board approves survey questions and self evaluation form. Provide Director with self-evaluation form.
2. Send out survey to limited staff including all of the management team and those who report directly to the Director.
3. Interview or survey outside contacts including the Mayor and Director of WCLS, and up to two additional outside contacts if the Board determines that additional input would be useful.
4. Director provides self-evaluation to Board
5. Committee members review survey data, self-evaluation and external surveys/interviews.
6. Committee members will write the evaluation report.
7. Report will go to the entire Board and will be discussed in executive session.
8. Board approval of the evaluation
9. Library Director will receive report
10. Possible consultation between Library Director and Board members in executive session.

October 21, 2025
Meeting Minutes Attachment #2

Justice Project Behavioral Health: Concepts and Visioning Behavioral Care Center Models



WHATCOM COUNTY
**HEALTH AND
COMMUNITY
SERVICES**



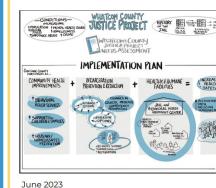
1

Purpose

- Align on the vision and long-term goals for the justice project
- Review insights guiding our next steps
- Discuss considerations for the new jail behavioral health elements and behavioral care center
- Preparing for decisions needed to move forward



WHATCOM COUNTY JUSTICE PROJECT NEEDS ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



2

Starting at Booking Concept



Re-entry staff at booking to support early exit

Goals: avoid housing unit placement when possible

- Reduce time in jail
- Early connection to services

Assist with connecting to:

- Providers
- Family/friends
- Legal supports



Photo Credit: <https://myfox28columbus.com/news/local/gallery/franklin-county-is-modernizing-not-only-its-jail-but-how-it-operates?photo=5>

3

Environment Matters: Therapeutic Design



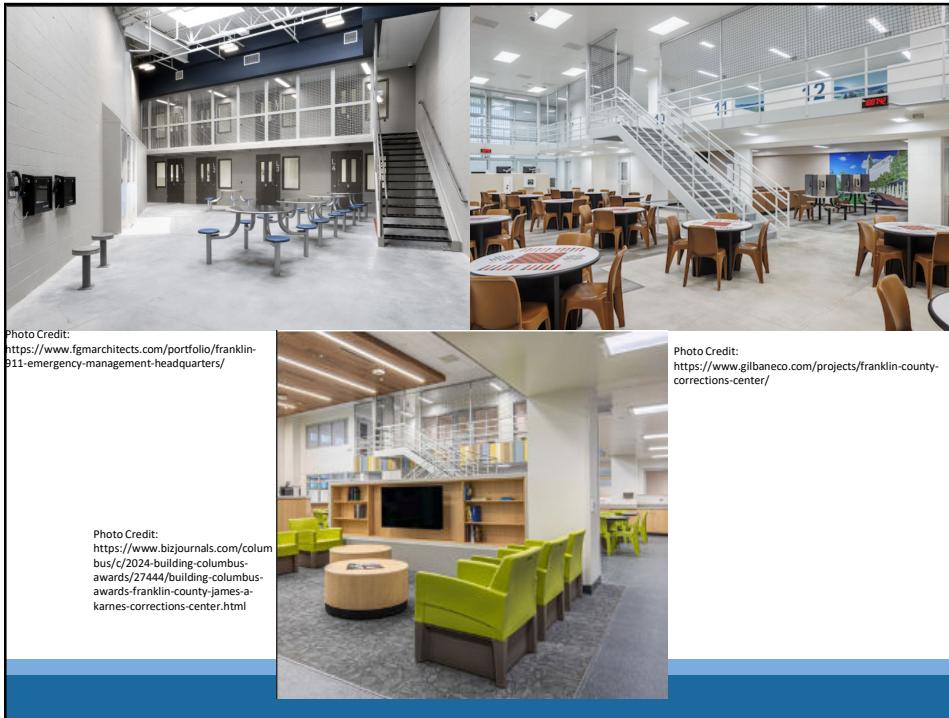
Conceptual Ideas to Review:

- Natural light, murals, textures, biophilic designs
- Recreational space access
- Direct supervision
- In-unit rooms for:
 - Group treatment
 - Skill based interventions
 - Support groups
 - Medical services
 - Family/community/attorney visitation
 - Supervised visitation with children



Photo Credit: <https://myfox28columbus.com/news/local/gallery/franklin-county-is-modernizing-not-only-its-jail-but-how-it-operates>

4



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Inside the Jail: Behavioral Health Unit Possibilities



Designed for individuals with safety risks (to self/others)

Features

- Smaller staff-to-inmate ratios
- Reduced stimuli, more privacy
- Explore programming models such as Intensive Outpatient Programming (IOP)

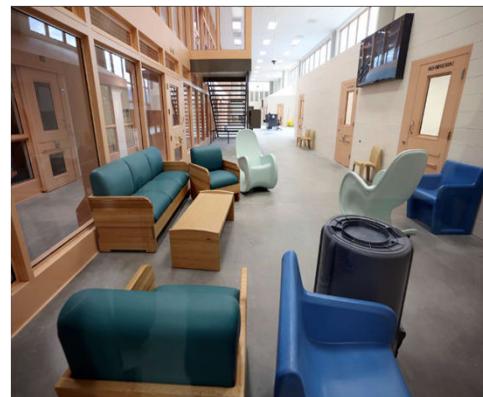


Photo Credit: <https://www.ksl.com/article/50442238/too-nice-for-inmates-or-redefined-why-new-prison-is-much-different-than-at-point-of-the-mountain>

6

Acute Medical Considerations

- Line of sight supervision for those with acute symptoms
- Detox beds

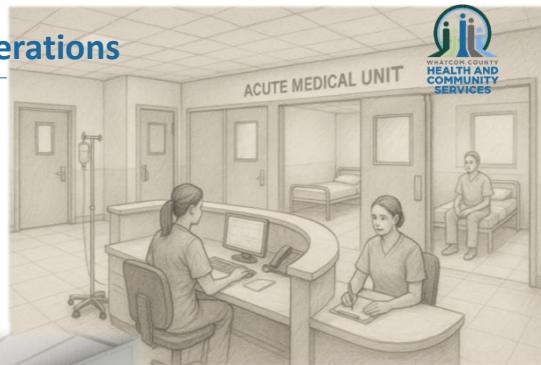


Photo Credits: <https://correctionalnews.com/2017/08/09/new-hampshire-womens-prison-will-focus-health-care/>

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The Exit Plan: Rapid Resource Center

- Located at the point of release
- Not in-custody
- Features:
 - Phone chargers, snacks, clothes
 - Transportation support
 - Staff to bridge to housing/treatment
 - Non-correctional setting



Photo Credit: <https://www.cmta.com/results/briefs/northeast-community-resource-center>

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Behavioral Care Center Concepts



WHATCOM COUNTY
**HEALTH AND
COMMUNITY
SERVICES**



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Behavioral Care Center (BCC)

- A new facility
- In vs out-of-custody
- On-site vs off-site
- Goal:
 - Reduce unnecessary incarceration
 - Support pre-filing deferral, post-charging diversion
 - More eligible cases= more diversion opportunities
 - Improve public safety through treatment
 - Maximize available funding streams
 - Address MH and SUD needs early
 - Reduce Recidivism
 - Reduce legal case loads
 - Structured process
 - Free up court/jail for higher-risk cases



Photo Credit: <https://www.futurebelfast.com/property/acute-mental-health-inpatient-unit/>

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In-Custody BCC Model Pros and Cons



Pros

- Legal pathway for those with charges who are not eligible for release
- Increase in safety
- Typically higher levels of completion
- Contained environment

Cons

- Less flexible
- Not Medicaid reimbursable
- Technically still in-custody- not available for people released
- Smaller targeted population
- Long-term outcomes not as supportive

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Out-of-Custody BCC Model Pros and Cons



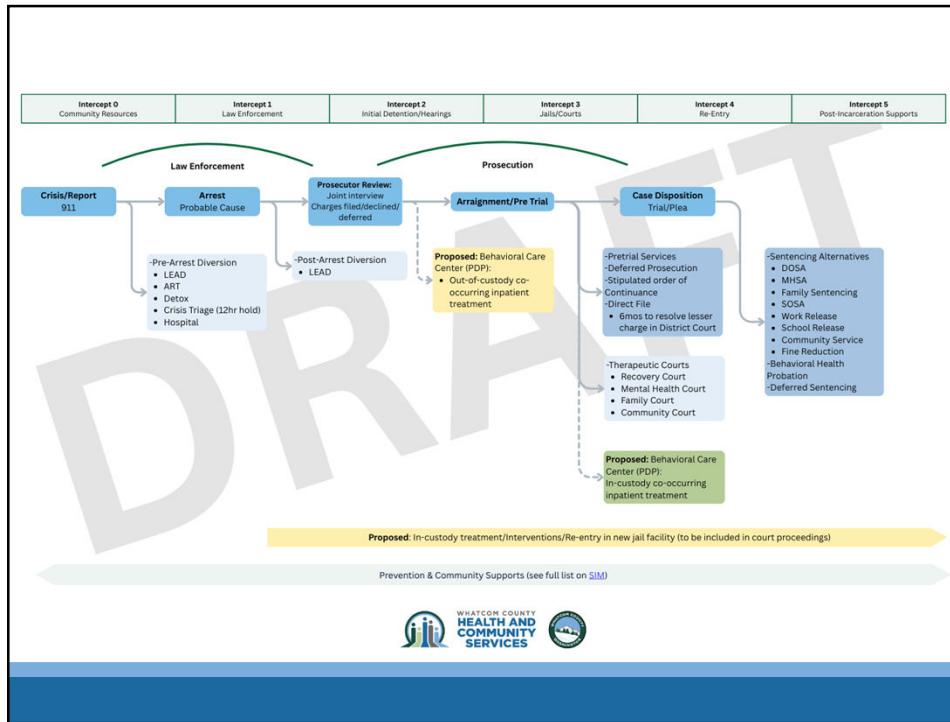
Pros

- Medicaid eligible
- Feels more voluntary and recovery focused
- The potential for different types of treatment facilities
- Legal pathway for those released to access treatment
- Longer treatment options available

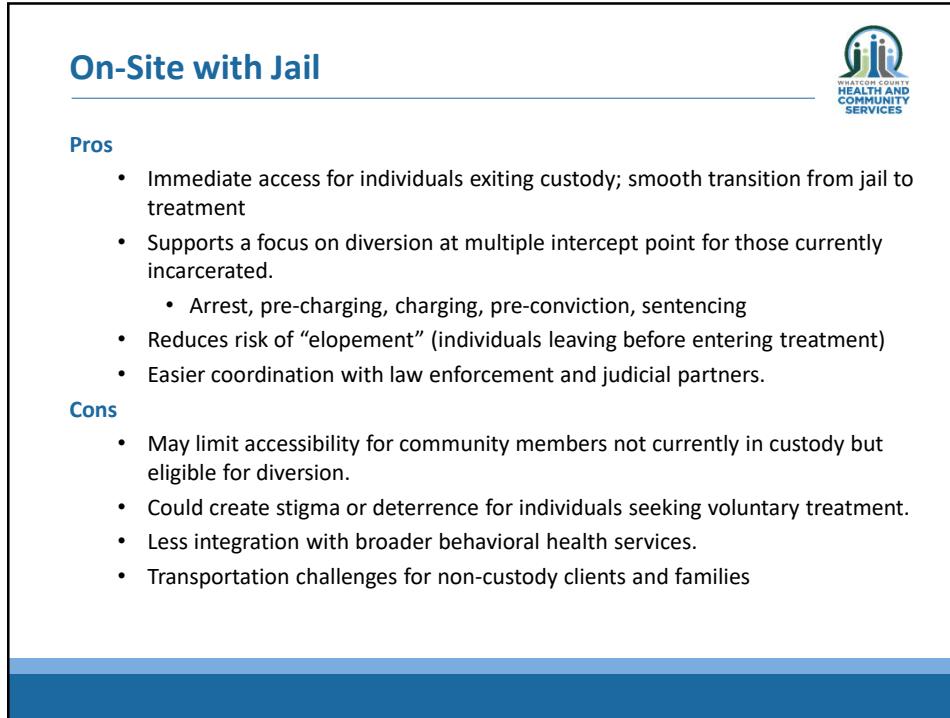
Cons

- May require greater coordination with legal systems
- Requires a more robust community effort and follow-through
- The providers have to have a shared vision to ensure it works as intended
- Completion rates are not as high

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13



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Off-Site on Behavioral Health Campus



Pros

- Co-located with crisis treatment and behavioral health providers; promotes holistic care.
- Supports a focus of diversion earlier- before justice system involvement
- Easier access for community members seeking treatment voluntarily.
- Potential to prevent deeper system involvement by catching individuals before arrest.
- Can be used at multiple intercepts.

Cons

- More complex to coordinate transfers from jail, especially for immediate post-release diversion.
- Higher risk of “elopement” when moving people from custody to an off-site location if transportation needs are not addressed.
- Requires strong collaboration between courts, prosecutors, and treatment providers.
- Resistance may be a factor for law enforcement where probable cause is established and booking restrictions are lifted.

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23 Hour Crisis Center: Information Gathered



WHATCOM COUNTY
HEALTH AND
COMMUNITY
SERVICES



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Co-location Option: 23 Hour Key Elements

- Short-term, voluntary crisis care- up to 23 hours and 59 minutes
- 24/7 access- open day and night
- No wrong door- law enforcement, EMS, hospitals, walk-ins all accepted
- Rapid stabilization- behavioral health + basic medical screening, medication support, peer counseling
- Safe alternative- to ER or jail- designed to connect people to longer-term care

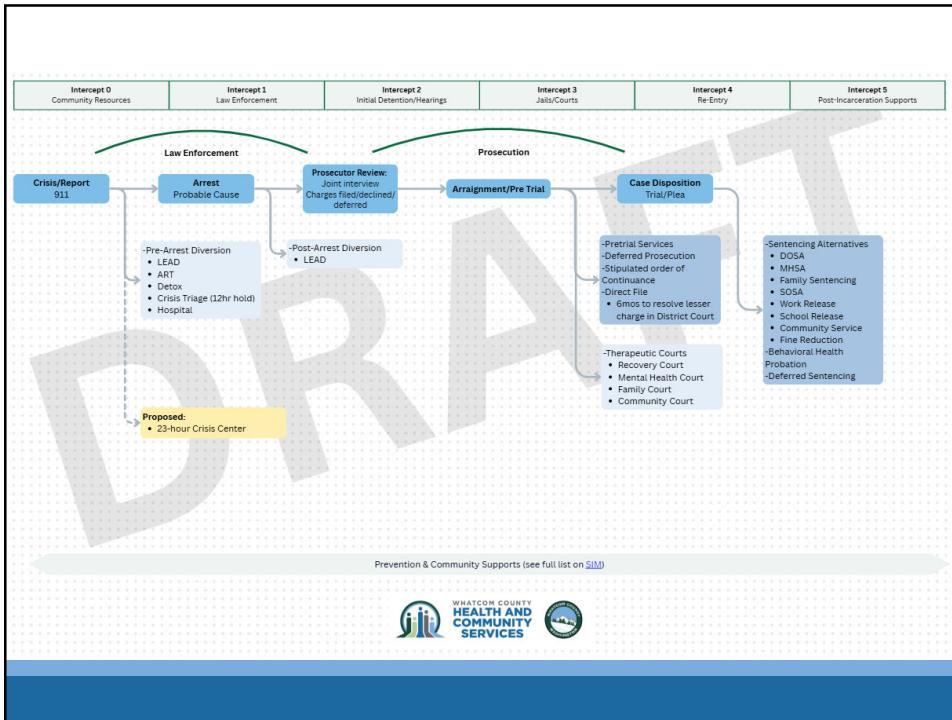


WHATCOM COUNTY
HEALTH AND
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SERVICES



Photo Credit: <https://brbridge.org/services/crisis-observation/>

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Funding Status



- 14+ capital secured (state, local, opioid settlement dollars)
- Operations funding remains unresolved
 - Relevant data points:
 - Medicaid is roughly about 40% of the budget
 - Non-Medicaid associated costs (\$4 to \$12 million annually)
- Risk: facility cannot open without sustainable operating dollars
- While the building dollars are secured, the challenge is how to keep it open long-term without cutting other critical services
- State law (HB 1813) will change how crisis stabilization is funded in 2026, but today, local operating dollars are still unfunded and it is unclear how the HB will impact Whatcom

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23 Hour Next Steps



- Continue explore funding partnerships (state, hospitals, insurers, local governments)
- Finalize stakeholder feedback; data will guide final model
- Sizing considerations/scaling of facility for funding constraints



Photo Credit: <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/mental-health/kirkland-is-opening-the-countys-first-walk-in-crisis-care-center/>

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Adjacent Facility Need Considerations

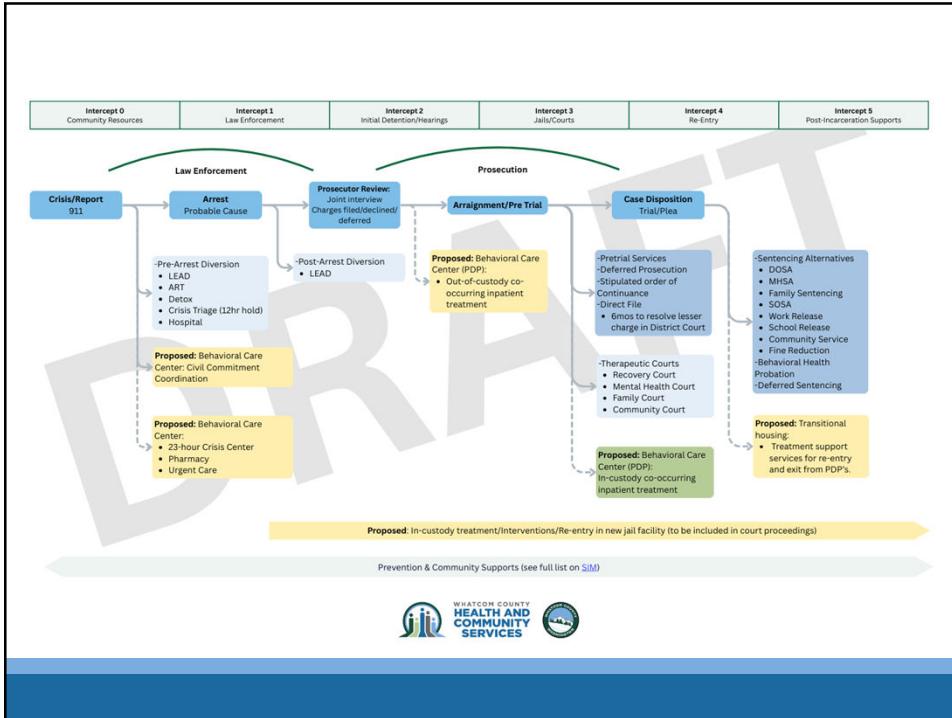
Facility Component		Purpose
BCC- Core	Crisis Relief	immediate stabilization and assessment for individuals in crisis.
	Co-Occurring Inpatient Treatment	Residential care for mental health and substance use disorders.
Phase 2- Complimentary Services	Competency Restoration	Services to help restore the individual's mental competency so they can understand the legal process and participate in their own defense.
	Psychiatric Urgent Care	Provides behavioral health care to treatment & release out of the hospital when appropriate.
Phase 3- Future Considerations	Reception and Access Hub	Centralized intake and navigation for individuals, family members, and referring agencies. Office space for existing and new services.
	Pharmacy	To provide medication to the adjacent facilities
Co-Occurring Inpatient Treatment- Youth	Residential care for mental health and substance use disorders- youth.	
Transitional/Repite Housing with treatment Supportive Services (20 units)	Bridge housing with on-site support for reintegration. Out-Patient treatment brought to the housing unit.	



Photo Credit: Roger's Behavioral Health rendering; <https://biztimes.com/rogers-behavioral-health-plans-residential-care-center-on-brown-deer-hospital-campus/>

- Need for a prioritization
- Assess for efficiency and effectiveness patterns with co-located services
- Focus on filling gaps in treatment continuum of care and intercept models

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Conclusion:



1. Are there innovative practices or models from other jurisdictions we should consider adopting here?
2. Which elements of these projects resonate most strongly with you?
3. After hearing the pros and cons, what aspects feel most promising?
4. Which parts raise the most questions or concerns for you?
5. Are there needs, services, or perspectives you feel are missing from these plans?
6. Is there anything we haven't addressed that should be shared with the design-build team for consideration?

Bellingham Public Library - Performance & Activity Measures, 2025

	October		Year to Date		YTD comparison 2025 with 2024
	2025	2024	2025	2024	
Holdings - Number of materials in the library's collection					
Physical copies added to the collection	1,664	2,714	15,815	19,183	-17.56%
Electronic copies purchased by BPL	61	137	1,003	1,500	-33.13%
Physical copies withdrawn from the collection	(380)	(365)	(21,917)	(20,937)	4.68%
Total physical holdings			177,752	183,372	-3.06%
Total electronic holdings available to BPL			174,158	159,697	9.06%
Total Holdings (Physical and Electronic)			351,910	343,069	2.58%
Circulation - Number of items checked out or renewed; includes Interlibrary Loan and Outreach activity					
Central Library					
Adult	37,337	40,794	384,070	406,174	-5.44%
Youth	39,378	40,757	405,281	416,880	-2.78%
Sub-Total Central	76,715	81,551	789,351	823,054	-4.09%
Fairhaven Branch					
Adult	5,106	4,765	49,212	48,926	0.58%
Youth	2,739	2,471	28,812	26,437	8.98%
Sub-Total Fairhaven	7,845	7,236	78,024	75,363	3.53%
Barkley Branch					
Adult	4,689	4,560	45,596	45,965	-0.80%
Youth	5,573	4,438	50,987	42,132	21.02%
Sub-Total Barkley	10,262	8,998	96,583	88,097	9.63%
Bellis Fair Branch					
Adult	1,198	1,104	13,407	11,938	12.31%
Youth	2,045	2,083	19,373	19,083	1.52%
Sub-Total Bellis Fair	3,243	3,187	32,780	31,021	5.67%
Bellingham Technical College					
Adult	31	40	361	344	4.94%
Youth	3	1	46	42	9.52%
Sub-Total BTC	34	41	407	386	5.44%
Whatcom Community College					
Adult	180	170	1,682	1,514	11.10%
Youth	34	16	250	263	-4.94%
Sub-Total WCC	214	186	1,932	1,777	8.72%
Western Washington University					
Adult	283	230	2,519	1,998	26.08%
Youth	78	80	683	701	-2.57%
Sub-Total WWU	361	310	3,202	2,699	18.64%
Sub-Total Physical	98,674	101,509	1,002,279	1,022,397	-1.97%
Online Services					
Kanopy	2,090	1,719	20,006	17,829	12.21%
WA Anytime Library Overdrive	41,347	39,624	407,373	403,097	1.06%
Overdrive Magazines	9,765	6,037	81,033	59,506	36.18%
Sub-Total Online	53,202	47,380	508,412	480,432	5.82%
Total Circulation	151,876	148,889	1,510,691	1,502,829	0.52%
Holds Activity					
Items placed on hold shelf	51,083	54,414	506,157	524,698	-3.53%
Services					
Persons Visiting - Number of persons counted as they enter the libraries					
Central Library	31,187	30,569	320,619	302,097	6.13%
Fairhaven Branch	3,425	3,462	33,067	31,579	4.71%
Barkley Branch	3,061	2,169	27,252	25,856	5.40%
Bellis Fair Branch	2,814	1,883	20,796	20,482	1.53%
Total Persons Visiting	40,487	38,083	401,734	380,014	5.72%
Website Visits					
This count reflects number of visits to www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org	44,101	41,363	422,633	418,156	1.07%
Bibliocommons visits					
This count reflects number of visits to Bibliocommons	24,529	25,204	261,003	329,234	-20.72%
Total Website Visits	68,630	66,567	683,636	747,390	-8.53%
Computer Usage - Number of sessions					
Central Library					
Adult & Teen (30 terminals)	3,285	3,319	34,040	31,560	7.86%
Childrens (3 terminals)	61	46	908	732	24.04%
Fairhaven Branch (6 terminals)	261	243	2,398	2,403	-0.21%
Barkley Branch (4 terminals)	158	162	1,344	1,587	-15.31%
Bellis Fair Branch (4 terminals)	148	109	1,440	1,215	18.52%
Total Computer Usage	3,913	3,879	40,130	37,497	7.02%
New Borrowers Registered					
Central Library	637	618	7,775	6,987	11.28%
Fairhaven Branch	38	41	386	383	0.78%
Barkley Branch	30	32	295	311	-5.14%
Bellis Fair Branch	59	46	454	501	-9.38%
Total New Borrowers Registered	764	737	8,910	8,182	8.90%
Programs - Library sponsored or co-sponsored educational, recreational, or cultural programs					
Programs	161	150	1,130	917	23.23%
Attendees	2,563	2,959	24,860	24,972	-0.45%
Volunteer Hours	310	303	4,211	4,638	-9.20%

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

OCTOBER 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 NOVEMBER 18, 2025, IN ACCORDANCE WITH RCW 27.12.210 AND 27.12.240.

	VENDOR	AMOUNT
Materials, Equipment and Supplies		
Books; DVDs; supplies	Amazon	1,421.68
Books	Baker & Taylor	8,157.09
Water	Clearwater Systems	21.26
Staff Learning Day Speaker Fee	Gayle Cloud	275.00
Barkley lightbulb	Home Depot	65.36
Books	Ingram	3,583.80
Staff Learning Day Speaker Fee	Lookout Mind + Movement	600.00
DVDs, CDs, recorded books	Midwest Tape	2,305.86
Lost Interlibrary loan	Multnomah County Library	18.99
Vehicle fuel	Nelson-Reisner Distributor	244.73
Office supplies	ODP Business Solutions	300.78
Shelving	Opto International	258.22
Staff Learning Day Speaker Fee	Tara Campbell	517.60
Books	Thomson West	679.07
ILL Mailers	Uline	377.00
Materials, Equipment & Supplies Sub Total		\$18,826.44

Services and Interfund Charges

Barkley Branch cleaning	Action Cleaning	722.11
Creative Cloud Subscription	Adobe	5,508.10
Membership Fee	American Library Association	180.00
Hotspot service	AT&T	18.24
Preprocessing	Baker & Taylor	2,336.50
Pest management	BioBug	72.98
Natural gas service	Cascade Natural Gas	536.50
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	1,740.00
Postage	City of Bellingham Interfund	869.50
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	3,583.88
Water/Sewer/SSW service (Central & Fairhaven)	City of Bellingham Interfund	1,168.23
Water Cooler Rental	Clearwater System	149.82
Copies	Copiers Northwest	39.92
Printing	Copy Source	92.62

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

OCTOBER 2025 CLAIMS

Alarm system monitoring	Guardian Security	176.10
Rollback RX subscription	Horizon Datasys	3,073.80
Copier leases and copies	Kelley Create	1,187.66
Cassie subscription	Librarica	1,215.62
Office and Windows subscription	Microsoft	14,905.75
Preprocessing	Midwest Tape	304.64
Mobile hotspot	Mobilebeacon	1,800.00
Bellis Fair internet service	Pogozone Wireless	376.49
Staff Learning Day Rental	Port of Bellingham	771.50
Electricity service	Puget Sound Energy	3,484.75
Waste disposal service	Sanitary Service Company	1,388.76
Bellis Fair Branch Cleaning	Sealx	1,275.30
Digital Subscription	Seattle Times	39.92
Barkley Rent	Talbot	533.33
Preprocessing	Uline	110.42
Q2 Borrower Notices; Orbis	WCLS	971.76

Services and Interfund Charges Sub Total \$169,396.95

Gift Fund

CDs, books	Amazon.com	1,854.87
Books	Baker & Taylor	891.94
Books	Center Point Large Print	108.43
Books	Chicago Books	57.85
Program Speaker Honorarium	Debra Shawver	200.00
WCF campaign marketing	Envelope Sales	262.45
Event Space Rental	Hotel Leo	2,261.52
Books	Ingram	378.40
Donor rack design	Katrina Lyon Design	255.00
Outreach bags	Lands End	212.35
Audiobooks	Midwest Tape	919.72
Hotspot service	Mobile Beacon	806.00
Honorarium	Monica Koller	2,000.00
Anti-Racist digital media	Overdrive Inc	214.99
Hotspot service	Verizon	1,600.40

GIFT FUND OUTLAYS Sub Total \$12,023.92

Total General Fund claims 188,223.39

Total General Fund & Gift Fund claims 200,247.31



City of Bellingham

Library - Budget to Actual - General Fund

OCTOBER 2025 83.33% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Grants	2,794	0		
Print and Copy Fees	16,062	15,000	(1,062)	107%
Lost, Damage & Non-resident Borrower Fees	8,495	16,100	7,605	53%
Fairhaven Auditorium Rental Fees		5,000	5,000	0%
Miscellaneous Revenues	772	0	(772)	
Total Revenue	28,122	36,100	7,978	78%
Expenses				
Salaries and Wages	2,867,268	3,369,234	501,966	85%
Personnel Benefits	1,165,509	1,368,283	202,775	85%
Physical Materials, Equipment and Supplies	198,411	307,932	109,521	64%
Services, Digital Materials and Interfund	2,173,636	2,672,160	498,524	81%
Total Expenditure	6,404,823	7,717,608	1,312,785	83%

Library - Budget to Actual - Gift Fund

OCTOBER 2025 83.33% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Donations	92,809	150,000	57,191	62%
Total Revenue	92,809	150,000	57,191	62%
Expenses				
Gift Fund expenses	75,333	50,000	(25,333)	151%
Total Expenditure	75,333	50,000	(25,333)	151%



DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR November 18, 2025



On October 25, I was honored to accept the Peace Builder Award for Public Service on behalf of the Bellingham Public Library. It was truly a wonderful and inspiring evening. My heartfelt gratitude goes to the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center for this meaningful recognition and for hosting an event that so beautifully emphasized the importance of compassion, dialogue, and community-building. The celebration was a powerful reminder of the impact we can have when we serve our community with openness and care. (Rebecca Judd, Library Director)

WELCOME & INCLUDE

Safe Places: The Bellingham Police Department is establishing a Safe Place™ Program as a partnership between BPD and businesses in our community. Participating businesses display a Safe Place™ decal on their front window. Victims of a hate crime can enter any of these businesses and expect care, dignity, and respect when asking for help. The Library will be one of BPD's first adopters. This program aligns with current Library practices and does not require a change in our procedures for use of phones for emergency use. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Security Staff Updates: The Security and Information Attendant position closed on Friday, October 31, 2025. Applications have been reviewed, and interviews will be scheduled for November 21, 2025. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY

Request for Proposal (RFP) for Library Materials: In collaboration with Matt Serier, Purchasing Manager for the City, Jon McConnel and I are crafting a Request for Proposal for library materials and shelf-ready processing. We anticipate to release the RFP before Thanksgiving and will accept responses for three weeks. After the RFP closes, Jon and I will score the responses, check references and award contract(s) to vendors. Matt is hopeful we'll have the awarded contracts settled just after the New Year. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

Book Purchasing/Processing Disruptions: The coming closure of Baker & Taylor has had significant impact on Selectors and Collection Services. Orders for well over 1,500 items have had to be cancelled and re-evaluated, with most being re-ordered elsewhere. Fulfillment from those other vendors has slowed dramatically due to the sudden increase in orders from all the libraries who are now forced to shift orders away from B&T. Ingram, for example, has responded by increasing hiring, pausing on-boarding new

clients, and pausing lamination of the covers of paperback books. We are expecting a lot of un-processed items to arrive this month, which CS staff will need to process. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

Access to Digital Services: Starting January 1, 2026, access to Freegal, Kanopy and Overdrive will be limited to residents of Bellingham. This includes individuals who live, work, own property, or attend school in the City of Bellingham, or in Whatcom County, via a WCLS card. As library revenues have declined, this change helps us focus our limited resources responsibly while continuing to provide quality services for the Bellingham community. This change aligns with the practices of WCLS and other Libraries in Washington State. Patrons affected by this change will be emailed in early December and changes will be made on the website leading up to, and after January 1, 2025. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Online Accessibility: Holly Pederson, the City's ADA Coordinator, held a training Oct. 27 for Library staff on using Equidox, a tool for creating screen-reader compatible PDFs. This is part of preparing for the April 2026 deadline for local governments of our size and larger to have their online presence compatible with a specific accessibility standard. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

READ & LEARN



Listen Deeply - Community Voices Film Fest, Nov. 1: This event was a huge success. A capacity crowd of 180 community members gathered with appreciation and joy to listen to and honor 15 local storytellers at Hotel Leo in Downtown Bellingham. BPL offers deep appreciation to our co-sponsors Monica Koller of Connecting Community and The Friends of Bellingham Public Library, event partner Ben Skudlarek of BTV, collaborators Community Health Plan of Washington and Whatcom Perinatal Mental Health Taskforce, volunteers from WAISN (Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network) Rapid Response team, and contributors Lhaq'temish

Canoe Family and Neto's Bakery. Special thanks to BPL staff members Katrina Buckman for managing the safety plan with care, Ali Kubeny for setting up a special kids corner, and Bethany Hoglund, Liz Hendershott, Jennifer Lovchik, Jenni Johnson and Miranda LeonJones for making it all happen and run smoothly. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Book Club Social, Nov. 15: A full house of 174 people are registered for our inaugural Book Club Social on Saturday, Nov. 15, 10 am – noon at Hotel Leo in Downtown Bellingham to celebrate book club culture and joy. Participants will meet local authors, gather new title suggestions, capture ideas to enrich their book group gatherings, and enjoy a special book buffet. This event is generously sponsored by The Friends of the Bellingham Public Library. Partners include BTV, Village Books, Bellingham Symphony Orchestra, and Whatcom Literacy Council. Additional special thanks to BPL staff members Suzanne Carlson-Prandini, Katie Bray, Kate Dunphy, Liz Hendershott, Rebecca Judd, Kang Cheng and Sonja Pedersen, as well as Bethany Hoglund, Jenni Johnson and Miranda LeonJones for their important roles in making this event an equal success! (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Sesame Street Workshop - Raising Kids in a Digital World: On Thursday, November 13, Children's Librarian Bernice Chang and Children's Programming Specialist Mandee Palmer presented a family-friendly workshop designed to help young children (aged 3 – 5) and their caregivers explore healthy digital habits together through creativity, stories and movement. The program curriculum and supplies

were created and provided by Sesame Street Workshop specifically for use at public libraries. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

INFORM & INVOLVE

Media Coverage: The Library's presentation to City Council on Oct. 20 regarding the 2026 proposed budget and the need to close on Sundays generated media stories in the Bellingham Herald, Cascadia Daily News and Salish Current. It also prompted interview requests from two reporters at the Western Front. The Bellingham Herald reported it was their number one online story for the week of Oct. 20 – 26. To clarify the details, BPL issued an open letter to the community on Sunday, Oct. 26 and provided staff with a list of answers to frequently asked questions. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Trick-or-Treating Fun: Thank you to Barkley Village and Bellis Fair Mall for hosting two very fun Trick-or-Treating events on Friday, October 31 from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Special thanks to library staff and Kate and Dana of the Friends of the Library for helping hand out candy to festive Trick-or-Treaters. The rainy, windy weather made the event slightly more mellow than usual at the Barkley Branch, but extremely busy at the Bellis Fair Branch! (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

THRIVE & GROW

Outdoor Book Return at Bellis Fair Mall: Our outdoor return box was recently hit and damaged by a delivery truck. The return box remains useable despite the damage. We are working with the trucking company to purchase and wrap a replacement top for the box at their expense. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)



Fairhaven Library Elevator: The elevator at Fairhaven Branch has experienced a switch failure which prevents it from accessing the upstairs (Auditorium). The elevator continues to provide access to the main floor and lower level while we wait for the new switch. We are working with the Parks Department to ensure that the upstairs door to the Auditorium is open before room users arrive for their reservations. We hope that the new parts arrive soon for the repair work. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

Microsoft 365 - File Migration Plan: The migration of all Library department files from our local servers to the Microsoft cloud occurred, as planned, on the evening of October 28. The migration was smooth with no technical difficulties. Library staff have since been getting acquainted with the new file pathways and file sharing options. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Phone System Replacement: The work scheduled for Oct. 22 to change how the City's internal phone system connects with the phone company occurred the morning of Oct. 29. No impacts to the library were reported, apart from an adjustment period while location identification was reestablished for calls to 911. There is now some redundancy in our connection, and it allows the City to implement a new internal phone system that uses Microsoft Teams. The plan is to complete that transition by the end of 2026. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

Contract Updates: (1) The 2026 Barkley Branch cleaning contract is in place for next year. Action Cleaners will provide another year of service (utilizing a one-year extension option) based on language included in the 2025 contract. (2) The Bellis Fair temporary lease contract has been signed for a period of 18-

months. This space is located next door (former Champs space) to the Bellis Fair Branch and will provide space for programming, services and storage during the renovation. The lease will run from Jan 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Judd

Summer Activation of Lee Memorial Park

Library Board
November 18, 2025
Item #7a
Incident and Behavioral Health Data

Below is a summary of the types and number of events in Lee Memorial Park from June 1, 2025 - September 5, 2025. Included is a snapshot of the total and average number of incident reports during events, the day of events, the day prior to events, and on days with no events. On the following page is a list of additional duties performed by City of Bellingham staff during and prior to events to help keep the space and participants safe, as well as staff-reported successes and challenges of summer programing.

2025 Parks Programs

- Tiny Tykes Tuesdays: July 8, 15, 22, & 29; 10:00am – 11:15am
- Fun Fridays: July 18, August 8 & 22; 11:00am – 2:00pm

2025 Library Programs (and participants)

- Summer Night Stories: June 17, July 24, & August 6; 5:15pm – 5:45pm (37)
- Summer Fun!: June 25; 10:00am – 12:00pm (134)
- Animals as Natural Therapy and Early Childhood Resource Fair: July 10; 2:30pm – 4:30pm (200)
- Children's Craft Fair: July 25; 11:00am – 1:00pm (400)
- Backyard Boogie: July 30; 1:00pm – 3:00pm & August 13; 10:30am – 12:30pm (67)
- Nature Spies: August 19; 10:30am – 12:00pm (46)
- Builder Board Fun!: September 4; 2:00pm – 4:00pm (35)

There was a total of 17 events, on 17 different days, over the course of the 94 days the Library was open this summer (from June 1 to September 5). The total participation count was over 900. The average number of incident reports was higher on days of events and days prior to events than on days without events. This is likely due to the increased vigilance of staff and the safety measures taken to prepare for events.

Library Incidents from June 1, 2025-September 5, 2025			
TOTAL NUMBER OF INCIDENT REPORTS	Central Exterior: Grounds & Park	Central Interior	Total: Central Exterior & Interior
Time of event	5	11	16
Day of an event	23	35	58
Day prior to an event	27	32	59
Days with no events	86	133	219
Total Incident Reports	141	211	352

Incidents/Day June 1, 2025-September 5, 2025		
AVERAGE NUMBER OF INCIDENT REPORTS/DAY	Central Exterior: Grounds & Park	Central Exterior & Interior
Day of an event (including time of event)	1.6	4.4
Day prior to an event	1.6	3.5
Days with no events	1.1	2.8
All days	1.5	3.7

COB Staff Preparation Prior to Summer Events in Lee Memorial Park:

All events:

- Solid waste team supervisor (Corey) or Security Supervisor monitors Park schedules and has solid waste team do a clean-up beforehand when possible (Consults with BPD officers when needed)
- City Security does extra rounds before the event
- City Security does frequent walk-throughs of the park and ground floor (around restrooms) during events

Parks events:

- At least one staff member walks the lawn beforehand to clear garbage and check for hazards
- Two staff scheduled for events in Lee Memorial Park

Library events:

- At least two Children's Staff go out and walk the lawn beforehand to clear garbage and check for hazards
- At least two staff schedules for events in Lee Memorial Park
 - Staff monitor any other park users and dissuade negatively-viewed behavior
 - Staff encourage parents and caregivers to speak with the children about staying close to the program area

Library Staff Feedback Regarding Summer Events in Lee Memorial Park (Prior to 2025)

Successes:

- Youth programming fosters joyful, boisterous community and fun.
- Programs engage community members and City/County staff who are walking past.
- Summer Programs make a lasting impression. (Patrons are still asking about the Friday afternoon concerts that Parks put on decades ago.)

Challenges:

- The Library stopped doing programming in the Japanese Friendship Garden because of the repeated discovery of needles and other hazards.
- Due to the discovery of needles and other hazardous items in Lee Memorial Park in general, prior to any program involving children on the lawn, staff do a thorough walk around of the property to clean up trash and any other hazard.
- Unleashed dogs cause unease for children/families/general individuals using the park/walking through the park to the library.
- Large-group events that occupy walkways (stairs, walking paths, sidewalks) make it difficult for patrons to access the library.
- As with all open, public spaces, any community member can be co-using the space. Depending on the behavior on the lawn, this can cause unease especially if behavior appears to be erratic, unpredictable or unsafe.

Conclusion

Data shows that activating the parks for summer programming takes additional preparation and vigilance on the part of Library, Parks, and Public Works staff. This is likely the cause of the increase in the number of incident reports on the day of and day prior to events. However, activation of Lee Memorial Park is a great benefit to the community, engages many participants, and makes a lasting impression on attendees. Park programming is highly visible and helps associate the Library and park property with youth learning and family recreation.

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY – 2025 Snapshot of Selected INCIDENTS, ACTIONS, and CONTACTS

Library Incident Snapshot	AUG	SEP	OCT	YTD
Abuse or destruction of property	1			8
Animal not under control	2			19
Camping	9	6	16	79
Disruptive behavior	13	4	10	112
Drug or alcohol use on site	2			10
Drugs or paraphernalia found	4	2	6	22
Excessive trash found*	16 gal	87 gal	82 gal	185 gal
Human waste found / Public urination or defecation *	6	9	3	28
Medical emergency or person in crisis	5	1	3	30
Physical attack or fighting				4
Restroom misuse	1		3	22
Sexual misconduct such as exposure, inappropriate touching, or sexual harassment				5
Sleeping	3	5	5	50
Smoking/vaping or Sensor alarm	26	43	44	386
Suspected overdose				2
Theft		1	1	7
Violation of existing trespass/exclusion	8	7	15	83
Unattended property	20	13	18	116
Vandalism/graffiti	1		1	12
Verbal or physical threats and/or intimidation				14
Welfare/wellness check*	1	3	1	9

*Began tracking in summer 2025

Actions Taken	AUG	SEP	OCT	YTD
Verbal/written warning	55	39	72	456
Told to leave for the day	7	6	8	89
Exclusion Issued (1 week - 1 month)	8	2	6	77
Trespass Issued (3 months +)/Call to 911	3	2	7	59
Other calls to 911	6	1	6	67

HEART Contacts	AUG	SEP	OCT	YTD
Total Number of Individuals Served	58	51	91	690
Individuals that were Referred to Another (non-inpatient) Agency - Community Resource	45	38	81	426
Number of Individuals Entered into a more restrictive Setting (i.e. ER, Crisis Triage, Detox, jail, etc)	6	2	5	48
Total number of times (HEART Phone used)	35	27	66	331
“Non-Billable” Contacts*	71	60	67	350

*Individuals who have not shared their names and dates of birth and are not included in “Number of Individuals Served”

**This data has only collected/reported since 5/21/2025

Sample Incidents from August - October 2025:

8/5/2025 10:40 - Security placed unattended belonging flyers on several items. When walking towards bike racks, they saw the owner of the items seated on north brick retaining area of bike rack space. The patron was looking down at an aluminum can that had been crushed down into a smoking device in his hand. Security then noticed him remove a lighter and a yellow crumbled substance from a small tin.

8/31/25 3:08 - A patron, who was trespassed for repeated camping on Library property multiple times and has repeatedly violated trespass, returned to the Library, unsure when her trespass expired. Staff informed her again. Patron indicated she has nowhere else to go and that the Library was the only place she felt safe to camp/stay. She indicated she had stayed at Lighthouse previously but had reached the 90-day limit. She was unsure if she would be accepted back and did not want to go there again.

9/13/25 13:00 – While conducting a routine interior patrol of the library, security staff was approached by a Library staff member who expressed concern regarding a potential biohazard on the loading truck. The staff member reported observing what appeared to be fecal matter and fingerprint smears on the driver's side of the vehicle. Security staff accompanied the staff member to the loading dock to assess the situation. Upon inspection, Security staff observed visible biohazardous material consistent with the description provided. Security staff documented the scene and contacted the custodial staff who responded promptly and completed the cleanup of the affected area on the truck.

9/26/25 9:43 - While on pre-open rounds, Security staff found a small baggie with white powder residue, several foil pieces, and a piece of broken glass from a pipe in the plaza planter box. The items were tucked behind the planter box wall, near the north end of the bike racks. Security staff disposed of all paraphrenia.

9/27/25 16:54 - While stationed at the security desk, a patron approached and expressed concern that another patron appeared to be having a hard time. In response, security staff coordinated with HEART Specialist to conduct a wellness check. They located the patron in crisis on the sidewalk, where he was visibly distressed—yelling in pain, walking erratically, and clutching his hand. He stated that "the devil is inside his hands." The HEART Specialist attempted to engage with him and asked if he required medical attention. He declined the offer. Shortly after, he walked toward another patron and requested a cigarette. He then crossed the street and continued heading toward downtown.

10/5/25 2:00pm - Library staff contacted security staff about a verbal altercation between two patrons near local history. One patron stated that the other patron had a knife and was threatening him. Staff observed a silver folded blade knife laying on the desktop of the other patron's table. This patron seemed flushed, possibly agitated. He exclaimed loudly that he hadn't threatened anyone. Security staff let him know that he needed to put the knife away and that this behavior wasn't library appropriate. He yelled, cursed, and started to collect belongings while talking/swearing over staff directions. He lunged at the other patron in a feint that appeared intended to cause alarm/fear. The patron departed to BPL main entry and left property.

10/15/25 12:37 – Security staff placed an "Unattended Items" tag on a cart with a silver tarp cover that was present since 10:30 that morning. When placing tags on another cart, the security attendant was approached by the owner, who said he was just getting back from picking up prescriptions. The security attendant reminded the person of unattended items rules of conduct and stressed that if he left library property for any length of time, his belongings needed to come with him. He acknowledged that he understood.



TO: Library Board of Trustees

FROM: Rebecca Judd, Library Director

DATE: November 18, 2025

SUBJECT: 2026 calendar of scheduled closure days

City-observed holidays for 2026:

Holiday	Day	Date
New Year's Day	Thursday	January 1
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Monday	January 19
Presidents' Day	Monday	February 16
Memorial Day	Monday	May 25
Juneteenth	Friday	June 19
Independence Day Observed	Friday	July 3
Independence Day	Saturday	July 4
Labor Day	Monday	September 7
Veterans Day	Wednesday	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday	November 26
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday	November 27
Christmas Eve	Thursday	December 24
Christmas Day	Friday	December 25

Additional Library closure days:

All Staff Training Day – Wednesday, October 7, 2026

Library closes at 5pm on Thursday, December 31, 2026



TO: Library Board of Trustees
FROM: Rebecca Judd, Library Director
DATE: November 18, 2025
SUBJECT: 2026 Regular Library Board Meeting Schedule

Each year the Board reviews the day of week, time of day, and location for its meetings in the upcoming year.

Regular Board Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month **in the Lecture Room at the Bellingham Public Central Library, 210 Central Avenue.** Meetings begin at 3:30 p.m. The public is welcome to attend and is encouraged to check the library's website for the meeting agenda and packet.

2026

Tuesday, January 20
Tuesday, February 17
Tuesday, March 17
Tuesday, April 21
Tuesday, May 19 – Fairhaven
Tuesday, June 16
Tuesday, July 21
Tuesday, August 18
Tuesday, September 15 – Bellis Fair
Tuesday, October 20 – Bellis Fair
Tuesday, November 17 – Bellis Fair
Tuesday, December 15 – Bellis Fair

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY RATES and FEES

Effective January 1, 2026

Library Board
 November 18, 2025
 Item #12 Rates & Fees

Library Rates and Fees are set by the Library Board of Trustees	
Description	Fee
Fees	
Non-Resident borrower fee	\$52/year
Senior Non-Resident borrower fee	\$26/year
Visitor fee	\$5/month
Photocopies/Print copies	
Black and White	.15/page
Color	.50/page
Lost and Damaged Library Materials	replacement cost
Collections fee	\$10
Facility use rates	
Fairhaven Branch Auditorium - now managed by Parks Dept	