

**BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES**

**NOTICE OF MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
of TUESDAY, December 16, 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: November 18, 2025: Regular Board Meeting• Library performance & activity measures: November 2025• Financial reports Claims: November 2025 YTD report: November 2025 3rd Quarter Patron Use of Databases and Learning Resources	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. 2025 Board of Trustee Officer Elections – Action Item	5 min
• Rebecca Craven, Board Chair	
7. 2025-2027 Bridge Strategic Plan (see packet materials) - Discussion	15 min
• Rebecca Judd, Director	
8. 2025 Draft Action Plan (see packet materials) - Discussion	15 min
• Rebecca Judd, Director	
	Time check: 4:20
9. Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update	10 min
• Rebecca Judd, Director	
10. 2026 Budget update	5 min
• Rebecca Judd, Director	
11. Central Library Renovation update (see packet materials)	15 min
• Rebecca Judd, Director; Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations; Caleb Savage, Facilities Project Manager – Public Works	
• Fundraising - Kristy Van Ness, Vice Chair	
	Time check: 4:50
12. New business	3 min
13. Agenda items for next meeting	2 min
	Time check: 4:55
14. 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 20, 2025 – 3:30 p.m.
Location: Lecture Room, Central Library, 210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, Washington



Communications & FYI

- *Lynnwood Times* **Nov. 11, 2025** [Washington State Library Launches New Certification Portal for Library Cardholders](#)
- *Cob.org* **Nov. 19, 2025** [Bellingham launches program to support victims of hate crimes](#)
- *Salish Current* **Nov. 24, 2025** [Higher taxes and fewer employees](#)
- *Cob.org* **Nov. 26, 2025** [Bellingham to open severe weather day shelter](#)



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

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

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

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

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

Public comment: No public comment.

Consent agenda: Deborra Garrett moved to approve the October 21, 2025 Regular meeting minutes and the October 2025 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Kendra Bradford seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report: Rebecca Craven reported that it was meaningful to attend the WDRC dinner where the Library received the Peacekeeper Award. She also commented on the Literacy Council breakfast with Nancy Pearl, noting that it was a positive event.

Rebecca Craven announced that Kristy Van Ness's first trustee term expires in January 2026. She moved to extend Kristy's trusteeship for one additional term, and the motion was seconded by Deborra Garrett. The motion carried. Rebecca Judd will request the reappointment from the Mayor.

Board member reports:

- Kristy Van Ness attended the Library's Listen Deeply event, which was moving and well-attended by 180 community members. She expressed appreciation to FOBPL and Library staff for organizing the event.
- Shirin Deylami shared that WWU is hosting Ralph Munro seminars on civic education and engagement on November 18 and 19.

City Council Liaison Report: Hannah Stone reported that the Peacekeeper Award video was very impactful. She also noted that in a recent interview with AWC Cityvision Magazine, she emphasized the importance of the new REET funding legislation to the Library.

Friends of BPL Report: Carol Comeau reported that she attended the Listen Deeply event, the Book Club Social, and the Literacy Council breakfast, all of which were well attended. She stated that the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library Board meeting is scheduled for November 19. She also indicated her desire to bring advocacy talking points to the County Council regarding the need for day shelters.

Library Director Report: Rebecca Judd reported that *Solito* has been selected as the Whatcom Reads title for 2026. She announced that Isabel Wilkerson will speak this winter about her book *Caste*. She thanked staff for their work on the Book Club Social and the Listen Deeply Film Fest, with particular recognition of Miranda LeonJones and the adult programming committee.

Rebecca stated that funding requests will be presented at the Friends Board meeting the following day, with final decisions expected in January. In response to a question from Kendra Bradford about changes to digital service access, she clarified that the changes affect non-Washington residents and Washington residents living outside Bellingham and Whatcom County. In response to a question from Shirin Deylami about circulation trends, she explained that increased branch hours likely contributed to recent circulation patterns. Bethany Hoglund added that youth circulation increased due to expanded hours and changes to the youth collection.

Rebecca Craven raised concerns about visitor numbers during the Central Library renovation. Deborra Garrett noted the high number of incidents referenced in the Public Services report included in the board packet.

Staff Learning Day Presentation: Kate Dunphy provided a presentation on the logistics and outcomes of Staff Learning Day 2026. (*See attachment #1 at the end of the minutes*).

Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update: Katrina emphasized the Library's role in serving vulnerable populations and the resulting impact on staff. She reported that incident data is now shared monthly with the Downtown Forward group, which includes the Bellingham Police Department and the Fire Department.

Rebecca Judd underscored the importance of communicating the Library's experiences with the public and reiterated the community's need for a daytime shelter. The discussion also addressed how

programming in Lee Memorial Park may influence incident rates. vBoard members and staff discussed possible strategies for advocacy and increasing public awareness of these issues. Deborra Garrett moved to create a working group to explore advocacy strategies related to the Library's needs. The motion was seconded by Shirin Deylami and carried.

2026 Budget Update:

- Nothing to report.

Central Library Renovation Update:

- The new Bellis Fair lease contract has been signed.
- Kristy Van Ness reported recent donations: \$75,000 from the Mary Storr Foundation, \$10,000 anonymous gift, and a new Planned Giving Form submission.

2026 Holidays & Closures – Action Item (see packet materials)

- Rebecca Judd noted the 2-day Independence Day closure due to the Library's weekend schedule.
- Kendra Bradford moved to approve. Deborra Garrett seconded. Motion carried.

2026 Meeting Schedule – Action Item (see packet materials)

- Bellis Fair will be the placeholder location for fall meetings.
- Kendra Bradford made a motion. Deborra Garrett seconded. Motion carried.

2026 Rates & Fees – Action item (see packet materials)

- Kendra Bradford made a motion. Deborra Garrett seconded. Motion carried.

New Business:

- None.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- 2026 Action Plan draft

Meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting Tuesday, December, 16, 2025 – Central Library Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Attachments:

- Attachment #1: Staff Learning Day Presentation



- Meet the Staff Learning Day committee
 - Guiding statement
- “Launch” preparations
- “Launch” day 10.8.25
- Asteroid field
- Lessons from previous orbits
- Mission debrief
- Future mission
- Questions?

Staff Day Committee



Dani Knapp



Dani Sheldon



Lark Clayton



Jen Lovchik



Miranda Leonjones



Jenni Johnson



Kate Dunphy

Guiding Statement

We want our event to offer an employee-centric, participatory, active learning environment where staff members can learn new information and strengthen existing skills within and across every workgroup. After attending, BPL colleagues will have a better understanding of each other's roles, feel a greater sense of unity, and have increased enthusiasm and motivation for our work together.



“Launch” Preparations

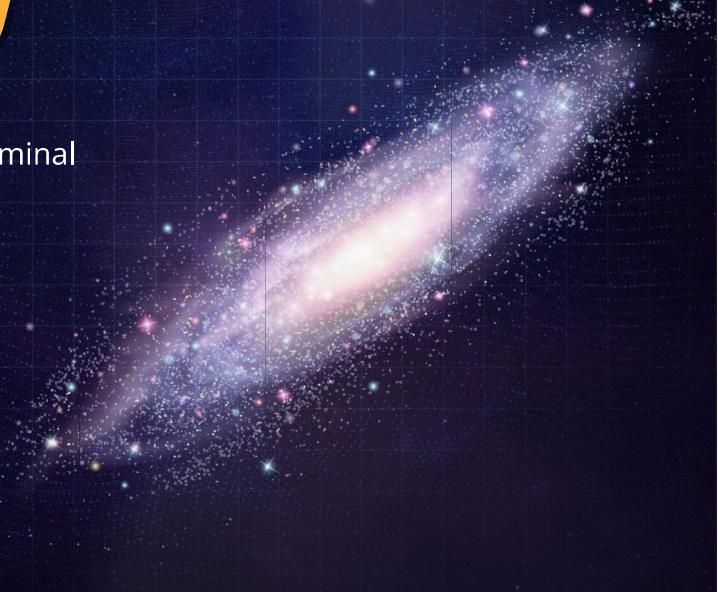
- Internal speaker application process
 - 9 proposals
 - 7 selected, 2 combined
- Pre-event survey to all staff
 - 30 responses (40% response rate)
- External speaker survey and prep interviews

“Launch” Preparations

- Washington State Library Professional Development grant
 - Individual and group applications accepted
 - \$6,000 max per library system
 - \$1,000 max per individual library employee
- Support from Friends of Bellingham Public Library
- Adjust staffing and delivery schedules week of 10/8
- Confirm M-team support for event set-up and strike
- COB collaboration
 - BTV - Ben Skudlarek
 - HR benefits team

“Launch” Day

- All branches closed
- Staff report to Bellingham Cruise Terminal
- 8:30 - 5:00pm
- COVID booster & flu shot clinic
- Accessibility & comfort
 - Movement breaks
 - Sensory tools
 - Coffee, meals, snacks
 - Low-sensory space



“Launch” Day

- 3 breakout periods
 - 7 sessions
- 6 all-staff sessions
- 15 internal presenters
- 4 external presenters
- Passive interaction stations
 - Staff led-games
 - Library scrapbooks





Asteroids

- External presenter cancellation
- Venue repair work
- Misaligned external presenter



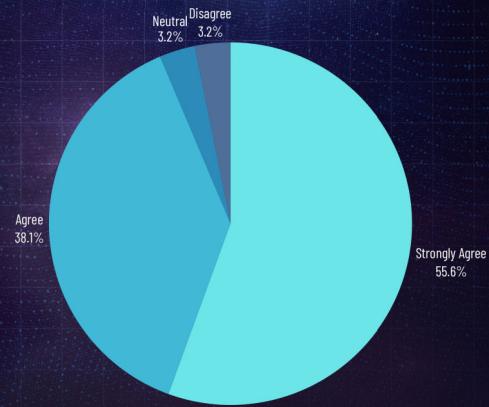
In Our Last Orbit...

Lessons Learned...

- INTERNAL SESSIONS RESONATE STRONGEST
- BREAK UP THE AFTERNOON SCHEDULE - MORE MOVEMENT AND CAFFEINE
- FOCUS ON PRESENTERS FROM COMPARABLE (OR LARGER) LIBRARY SYSTEMS
- ADJUST STAFF SCHEDULE IN DAYS FOLLOWING THE EVENT

Mission Debrief

- WSL Evaluations collected at event.
 - 63 of 74 participants responded.
 - 85% response rate
 - 59 of 63 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they learned something by participating in Staff Learning Day
- 2025 Staff Survey conducted via digital form in early November.
 - 41 of 74 invitees responded.
 - 55% response rate



Mission Debrief

- 2025 Staff Survey
 - *How did this year's Staff Learning Day compare to 2024?*
 - "I enjoyed this year's more. It felt more interactive and kept me engaged compared to the previous year. Given that this is only the second year, the improvements felt impactful."
 - "I think both were really well orchestrated! I appreciated how many inhouse presenters there were, as these sessions from 2024 had been among my favorites. The librarian panel in particular was wonderful! Coffee didn't run out!"

Mission Debrief

- 2025 Staff Survey
 - *What worked well at Staff Learning Day 2025 that we should keep doing in the future?*
 - "Loved the opportunities to move. Many of us move as part of our daily work, so staying seated for an entire day creates aches and pains. This year's yoga and stretching sessions were much appreciated."
 - "I like the food/beverage setup. Mixing up different workgroups at the table is really great!! Have longer staff member presentations, those were the best!! Rebecca's update on reno and actually asking for questions and answering what she could, thank you! I liked the 'get to know the librarians'. It would be cool to do that with CS, IT, Security, etc. "

Mission Debrief

- 2025 Staff Survey
 - *What did not work well at Staff Learning Day 2025 that we should either correct or not do next year?*
 - "This year almost felt too full, if that makes sense. I would also like to see more focus on our local partners."
 - "It seemed like every single session included active participation. It was draining having to be mentally engaged for every single session. Maybe throw in some straight lecture sessions where the audience isn't forced or encouraged to participate and can just focus on listening."

Mission Debrief

- 2025 Staff Survey
 - *What was missing from Staff Learning Day 2025 that we should start doing next time?*
 - "It would be neat to have the primary presenter be a nationally recognized librarian for banned books or books that community can be in conflict with. Working in and through conflict while working towards freedom of speech/reading rights for all. Unfortunately this might be even more relevant next year."
 - "We may want to do more team-building activities in 2026 since our time together as staff will be disjointed as a result of the Central building renovation and closure."

Mission Debrief

- *On a scale of 1-5 lightbulbs (with 5 being the most successful and 1 being the least), and with the entire day in mind, please rank how well the Staff Learning Day Committee met our guiding statement:*
 - Staff members' average rating: 4.29 out of 5.



Mission Debrief

- 2025 Staff Survey
 - *What are the primary factors for your ranking above?*
 - "I think that the Staff Learning Day Committee met their guiding statement. The sessions included a lot of active participation. I don't necessarily think that active participation is the best or most enjoyable way for everyone to learn."
 - "The day felt very employee-centric that created unity and I really enjoyed learning about the librarians at the end of the day! I think there was still a piece missing related to deepening my understanding of everyone's role."

Future Missions

- October 7, 2026
 - Whatcom Museum's archivist and historian, **Jeff Jewell**
 - ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom's director **Deborah Caldwell-Stone**
- And beyond!
 - Increased promotion of internal speaker application process to all BPL staff

- 2025 Staff Survey
 - *Is there any other feedback you'd like to share?*

"Thank you for putting on a Staff Day! It is valued and is a huge lift. I'm laughing at myself as my primary criticism is, "I want more time to learn about my co-workers". Wanting more time with co-workers is good, right?"



Questions?

Bellingham Public Library - Performance & Activity Measures, 2025

	November		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	2,562	1,119	18,377	20,302	-9.48%
Electronic copies purchased by BPL	120	40	1,123	1,540	-27.08%
Physical copies withdrawn from the collection	(290)	(322)	(22,207)	(21,259)	4.46%
Total physical holdings			178,653	183,810	-2.81%
Total electronic holdings available to BPL			174,790	158,031	10.60%
Total Holdings (Physical and Electronic)			353,443	341,841	3.39%
Circulation - Number of items checked out or renewed; includes Interlibrary Loan and Outreach activity					
Central Library					
Adult	34,882	40,124	418,952	451,696	-7.25%
Youth	37,370	39,848	442,651	457,135	-3.17%
Sub-Total Central	72,252	79,972	861,603	908,831	-5.20%
Fairhaven Branch					
Adult	4,764	4,732	53,976	53,658	0.59%
Youth	2,732	2,577	31,544	29,014	8.72%
Sub-Total Fairhaven	7,496	7,309	85,520	82,672	3.44%
Barkley Branch					
Adult	4,326	4,471	49,922	50,436	-1.02%
Youth	5,093	4,726	56,080	46,858	19.68%
Sub-Total Barkley	9,419	9,197	106,002	97,294	8.95%
Bellis Fair Branch					
Adult	1,231	1,126	14,638	13,064	12.05%
Youth	1,852	2,081	21,225	21,164	0.29%
Sub-Total Bellis Fair	3,083	3,207	35,863	34,228	4.78%
Bellingham Technical College					
Adult	22	28	383	372	2.96%
Youth	2	3	48	45	6.67%
Sub-Total BTC	24	31	431	417	3.36%
Whatcom Community College					
Adult	119	162	1,801	1,676	7.46%
Youth	27	12	277	275	0.73%
Sub-Total WCC	146	174	2,078	1,951	6.51%
Western Washington University					
Adult	237	236	2,756	2,234	23.37%
Youth	78	92	761	793	-4.04%
Sub-Total WWU	315	328	3,517	3,027	16.19%
Sub-Total Physical	92,735	100,218	1,095,014	1,128,420	-2.96%
Online Services					
Kanopy	2,161	1,861	22,167	19,690	12.58%
WA Anytime Library Overdrive	40,920	39,888	448,293	442,985	1.20%
Overdrive Magazines	8,553	7,472	89,586	66,978	33.75%
Sub-Total Online	51,634	49,221	560,046	529,653	5.74%
Total Circulation	144,369	149,439	1,655,060	1,658,073	-0.18%
Holds Activity					
Items placed on hold shelf	45,837	52,006	551,994	576,704	-4.28%
Services					
Persons Visiting - Number of persons counted as they enter the libraries					
Central Library	27,471	29,532	348,090	301,060	15.62%
Fairhaven Branch	3,250	2,934	36,317	31,051	16.96%
Barkley Branch	2,513	1,848	29,765	25,535	16.57%
Bellis Fair Branch	2,203	2,053	22,999	20,652	11.36%
Total Persons Visiting	35,437	36,367	437,171	378,298	15.56%
Website Visits					
This count reflects number of visits to www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org	44,520	40,124	467,153	458,280	1.94%
Bibliocommons visits					
This count reflects number of visits to Bibliocommons	23,869	23,789	284,872	353,023	-19.30%
Total Website Visits	68,389	63,913	752,025	811,303	-7.31%
Computer Usage - Number of sessions					
Central Library					
Adult & Teen (30 terminals)	2,894	3,054	36,934	34,614	6.70%
Childrens (3 terminals)	66	62	974	794	22.67%
Fairhaven Branch (6 terminals)	231	173	2,629	2,576	2.06%
Barkley Branch (4 terminals)	127	142	1,471	1,729	-14.92%
Bellis Fair Branch (4 terminals)	140	99	1,580	1,314	20.24%
Total Computer Usage	3,458	3,530	43,588	41,027	6.24%
New Borrowers Registered					
Central Library	580	502	8,355	7,489	11.56%
Fairhaven Branch	21	23	407	406	0.25%
Barkley Branch	22	18	317	329	-3.65%
Bellis Fair Branch	45	34	499	535	-6.73%
Total New Borrowers Registered	668	577	9,578	8,759	9.35%
Programs - Library sponsored or co-sponsored educational, recreational, or cultural programs					
Programs	124	87	1,254	1,004	24.90%
Attendees	2,656	2,283	27,516	27,255	0.96%
Volunteer Hours	308	235	4,520	4,873	-7.25%

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 DECEMBER 16, 2025, IN ACCORDANCE WITH RCW 27.12.210 AND 27.12.240.

	VENDOR	AMOUNT
Materials, Equipment and Supplies		
Books; DVDs; supplies; child masks	Amazon	850.84
Books	Baker & Taylor	2,515.43
Staff learning day supplies	Chef Store	95.60
Lost Interlibrary loan	City of Lake Oswego	18.00
Water (Barkley & Bellis Fair Branches)	Clearwater	42.51
Hand warmers	Costco	237.37
Caster replacements	Demco	60.08
Staff learning day supplies	Dollar Tree	5.53
Barcode scanner	Ebay	163.39
Periodicals	Ebsco Subscription Services	7,026.35
Caster replacements	Global Industrial	17.43
Bungee cords	Hardware Sales	23.94
Books	Information Today	502.53
Books	Ingram Library	593.52
Lost Interlibrary loan	Middlebury College	100.00
DVDs, CDs, recorded books	Midwest Tape	1,339.56
Vehicle fuel	Nelson-Reisner Distributor	224.70
Office supplies	ODP Business Solutions	348.65
Shelf refund	Opto International	-64.30
Periodicals	Seattle Times	1,248.00
Banner	Signs by Tomorrow	172.90
Security Patches	Tommy the Tailor	30.00
Lost Interlibrary loan	University of Alaska	110.00
Staff milestone anniversaries	Village Books	80.55
Materials, Equipment & Supplies Sub Total		\$15,742.58

Services and Interfund Charges

Barkley Branch cleaning	Action Cleaning	722.11
Memberships; PLA Stats; webinar; PLA registrations	American Library Association	457.00
Signage	Applied Digital Imaging	371.62
Hotspot service	AT&T	18.24
Preprocessing	Baker & Taylor	823.30
VMWare Software	Bridge Data Solutions	3,924.00
Natural gas service	Cascade Natural Gas	1,707.16
Veeam Software	CDWG	2,226.33
Banking & credit card fees	City of Bellingham Interfund	23.13
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
Postage	City of Bellingham Interfund	1,163.98
Qualified Energy Conservation Bond sinking fund	City of Bellingham Interfund	2,816.69
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	3,161.27
Playbook ad	City of Bellingham Parks department	1,125.00
Water/Sewer/SSW service (Central & Fairhaven)	City of Bellingham Interfund	1,350.30
Barkley & Bellis Fair branch water cooler rentals	Clearwater Systems	37.41
Copies	Copiers Northwest	58.00
Alarm system monitoring	Guardian Security	176.10
Graphic Design	Katrina Lyon Design	680.00
Copier leases and copies	Kelley Create	1,548.96
Preprocessing	Midwest Tape	208.12
eBooks, eAudibooks	Overdrive Inc	2,325.49
Bellis Fair internet service	Pogozone Wireless	367.49
Staff Learning Day Deposit Refund	Port of Bellingham	-100.00
Waste disposal service	Sanitary Service Company	1,417.03
Bellis Fair Branch Cleaning	Sealx	1,275.30
Digital subscription	Seattle Times	19.96
Barkley Branch operating costs	Talbot Services LLC	1,066.66
Microfische machine lease	Technology Unlimited	340.08
Borrower notices	Unique Management	285.60
Hotspot service	Verizon Wireless	1,600.40

Services and Interfund Charges Sub Total \$151,193.89

Gift Fund

CDs	Amazon.com	130.56
Staff Learning Day Supplies	Avenue Bread	239.55
Books	Baker & Taylor	219.05
Design Services	Bellingham Makerspace	65.28
Books	Center Point Large Print	198.96
Staff Learning Day Supplies	Community Food Coop	286.65
Family Programming supplies	Costco	233.90
Fiarhaven Magazines	EBSCO	1,436.09
Staff Learning Day Supplies	Fred Meyer	41.35
Staff Learning Day Supplies	Guud Bowls	123.12
Staff Learning Day Supplies	Hammerhead Coffee	116.49
Book Club Social Event Space Rental	Hotel Leo	1,847.26
Donor brochure	Katrina Lyon	340.00
Audiobooks	Midwest Tape	428.23
Event cake	Slice of Heaven Bakery	150.00
Event Translation Services	Syncwords	235.80

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

NOVEMBER 2025 CLAIMS

eBooks, eAudiobooks
Event Sound System

Overdrive Inc **1,750.87**
Whatcom Sound **372.25**

GIFT FUND OUTLAYS Sub Total **\$8,215.41**

Total General Fund claims **166,936.47**

Total General Fund & Gift Fund claims **175,151.88**



City of Bellingham

Library Board
December 16, 2025
Consent Agenda

Library - Budget to Actual - General Fund

November 2025 91.66% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Grants	2,794	0		
Print and Copy Fees	17,803	15,000	(2,803)	119%
Lost, Damage & Non-resident Borrower Fees	8,654	16,100	7,446	54%
Fairhaven Auditorium Rental Fees		5,000	5,000	0%
Miscellaneous Revenues	971	0	(971)	
Total Revenue	30,222	36,100	5,878	84%
Expenses				
Salaries and Wages	3,152,244	3,369,234	216,990	94%
Personnel Benefits	1,279,251	1,368,283	89,033	93%
Physical Materials, Equipment and Supplies	212,530	307,932	95,402	69%
Services, Digital Materials and Interfund	2,344,568	2,672,160	327,591	88%
Total Expenditure	6,988,593	7,717,608	729,015	91%

Library - Budget to Actual - Gift Fund

November 2025 91.66% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Donations	93,077	150,000	56,923	62%
Total Revenue	93,077	150,000	56,923	62%
Expenses				
Gift Fund expenses	320,907	405,000	84,093	79%
Total Expenditure	320,907	405,000	84,093	79%

Patron Use of Databases and Learning Resources

Vendor	Database	Metric	2024			2025			2025					
			Q3	Q1	Q2	Jul	Aug	Sep	Q3	TOTAL				TOTAL
Candid	Foundation Directory Online#	Profile Views	335	241	553	114	7	217		338				
Data Axe	Reference Solutions*	Detail Records Viewed, Downloaded, and Printed	7	-	7	2	12	28		42				
EBSCO	Consumer Reports	Page Views	8,739	10,183	9,029	3,323	2,745	2,333		8,401				
EBSCO	Ethnic Diversity Source	Requests	-	-	-	-	-	-		-				
EBSCO	NoveList Plus	Requests	135	87	124	22	123	73		218				
EBSCO	NoveList K-8 Plus	Requests	2	-	35	7	1	4		12				
Gale	Gale databases	Item Requests	447	444	409	310	163	452		925				
Gale	ChiltonLibrary.com	Retrievals	193	238	261	93	84	57		234				
Grey House	Weiss Financial Ratings	Page Views	588	481	1,873	647	318	195		1,160				
Library Ideas	Freegal	Songs Streamed or Downloaded	21,817	27,676	25,489	8,898	8,806	10,288		27,992				
LinkedIN	LinkedIN Learning	Video Views	2,596	2,915	2,163	1,301	2,140	1,417		4,858				
Mango	Mango	Sessions	1,507	1,555	1,506	578	636	652		1,866				
NewsBank	NewsBank^	Documents Viewed	6,226	11,293	13,231	4,505	3,637	4,199		12,341				
ProQuest	Ancestry Library Edition#	Document Views	1,396	2,383	966	41	226	368		635				
ProQuest	CultureGrams	Pages Viewed	68	9,693	815	86	10	1		97				
ProQuest	HeritageQuest	Records Viewed	613	476	346	-	154	179		333				
ProQuest	US Newsstream & US Dailies	Retrievals	801	930	1,104	721	746	921		2,388				
ProQuest	Newspapers.com - West	Retrievals	1,206	3,335	3,779	1,050	670	378		2,098				
			TOTAL	46,676	71,930	61,690	21,698	20,478	21,762	63,938				

No remote access

* In-Library stats only. Remote access counted to WCLS

^ In-Library and some remote stats. Other remote access counted to WCLS



DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR December 16, 2025

As the year draws to a close, we're reminded how meaningful our traditions are—offering us time to come together, celebrate one another, and look back on the accomplishments, hurdles, and standout moments of the past twelve months. On December 12, Library staff gathered before opening for a morning of activities and camaraderie. Special thanks to Staff Development Coordinator Kate Dunphy and Adult Services Librarian Suzanne Carlson-Prandini for their thoughtful planning, and congratulations to all staff marking milestone anniversaries: Lesley Norman (25 years), Bernice Chang (20 years), Annette Bagley (5 years), Karen Kupka (5 years), Greg Dodd (5 years), and Forrest Barlow (5 years). To revisit some of this year's memorable stories and moments, be sure to check out the [Best of the Library 2025 Staff Picks](#), curated by Adult Services Librarian Katie Bray, along with the [Bellingham Public Library 2025 Highlights](#), created by Community Relations Specialist Jenni Johnson. (Rebecca Judd, Library Director)

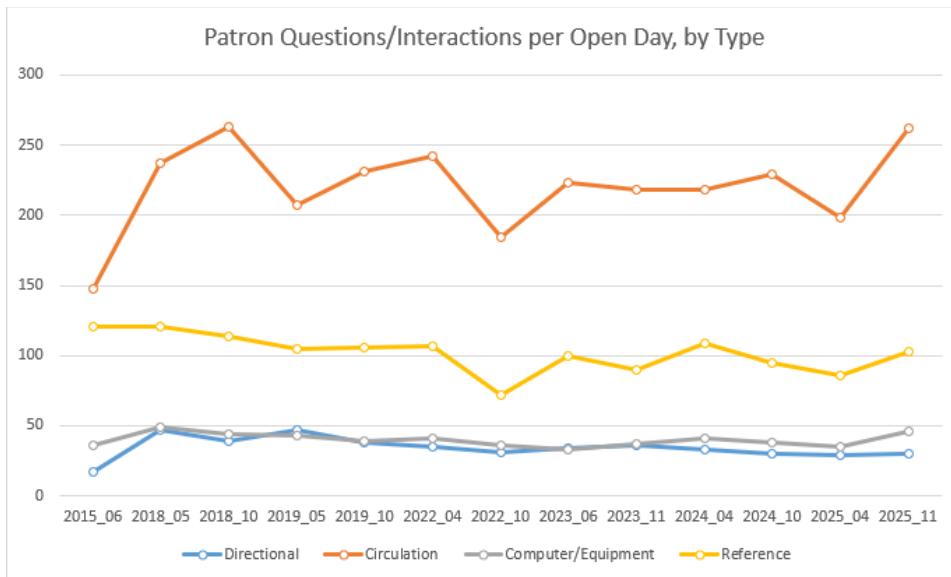
WELCOME & INCLUDE

Security Staff Updates: Jewel Johnson's temporary Security and Information Attendant position will be ending on December 31. This is Jewel's second year providing additional security support in the Library. Her presence and the experience she brings to the role have been invaluable to creating a safe and welcoming shared public space. Jewel's position as Park Ambassador will be ending and she will focus on her other jobs and family. Public Works is in the final stages of the hiring process for a new full-time Security Attendant. They hope to welcome a new team member in January. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Security Contract Update: Public Works is reviewing RFPs for contracted after-hours security in Lee Memorial Park. The successful contractor would provide a minimum of two patrols around the block containing the park and the Library between 7:00 pm and 8:00 am. Public Works is also working on the purchase and installation of a new camera at the main entrance. This would capture a 360 degree view of the entrance, street, and sidewalk in either direction. Both of these measures will help reduce camping and associated rules of conduct violations, as well as keep our book drop accessible. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Library Assistant Staffing Update: We are working to fill three Library Assistant vacancies using a list from the last staffing process. We plan to bring the new team members on board in early January. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

Patron Interaction Tally Week: From Nov. 17 – 23 we ran the second of two weeks this year where we log our interactions with patrons. The data is used to calculate an annual value for Reference Questions that we report to the State Library. The reported tallies this time were all increases over the first tally week this year (in April), and the daily rate of Circulation interactions was the highest since Oct. 2018! (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)



ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY

Research Referrals: When patrons have questions that require additional research or assistance, staff capture those requests by filling out an internal Research Referral form. The form is submitted to a queue of active research questions the librarian team works on. To date, the librarians have answered 483 research requests in 2025. These requests are varied and unique, ranging from technology troubleshooting, to reading recommendations, to in-depth research. While all librarians answer questions, Public Services Librarians Liz Hendershott and Rob Werner and Adult Services Librarians Katie Bray and Suzanne Carlson-Prandini answer the bulk of the questions. Thank you for providing this crucial service to the community. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

RFP for Library Materials and Services: The library issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for library materials and services on November 26 to replace Baker & Taylor. Responses will be accepted through 11:00 a.m. on January 6, 2026. Following the bid closure, City Purchasing will work with Jon McConnel and I to rate the responses and award contracts. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

Book Purchasing/Processing Disruptions: Collection Services has seen our first wave of orders arrive from book vendor Ingram. Because items currently come unprocessed, and without full cataloging records, it means a lot more work than we are staffed to handle. We currently have carts and carts and carts of items in various stages of processing. We're expecting this to persist well into 2026. Meanwhile, Baker & Taylor are in their very last days. We are still receiving the occasional small order as their remaining staff clear out remaining stock before the end of the year, and the end of the company. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

READ & LEARN

2025 Library Programs for Adults: As our very busy year comes to a close, here is a peek at our running list of special Library programs and outreach opportunities our adult programming committee worked on and attended in 2025. This is in addition to 24 Bellingham Reads book group meetings and approximately 300 Skillshare programs offered throughout the year, plus many other duties. Whew! (Annette Bagley,

Head of Community Relations)

- Jan. 4 - Bring the Light: Songs from the Heart – Miranda/Annette
- Jan. 18 - MLK event at Bellingham High School with CCCR (Community Consortium for Cultural Recognition) – Miranda
- Jan. 19 - Pickford *Free For All: The Public Library* – Bethany/Annette
- Feb. 4 - Basic Computer Skills w/Whatcom Literacy Council – Suzanne
- Feb. 5 - Learning Together Forum: Climate Action – Miranda
- Feb. 19 - Learning Together Forum: Life Below Water – Miranda
- Mar. 14 - Whatcom Reads at MBT – Miranda, Jenni, Annette
- Apr. 1 - Library Giving Day – Annette/Jenni
- April - Complimentary Dementia Education in Skillshare – Jenni
- Apr. 14 – 18 – Library Snapshot Week – Jenni/Miranda/Annette
- Apr. 17 - Learning Together Forum: Life on Land – Miranda
- May 1 - Learning Together Forum – Miranda
- May 14 - APIDA event at Whatcom Community College with CCCR (Community Consortium for Cultural Recognition) – Miranda
- June 17 – Work Readiness Fair off site – Jenni
- June 24 – Learning Together Forum – Miranda
- July 13 – Pride in Bellingham Parade – Miranda
- July 19 – Cordata Neighborhood Festival – Miranda/Jenni
- Sept. 25 – All Hands Whatcom – Annette
- Oct. 6 – Pickford *The Librarians* documentary
- Oct. 8 – All Staff Learning Day – Jenni/Miranda/Kate+committee
- Oct. 13 – Indigenous People's Day at Lummi Nation School – Miranda
- Oct. 16 – Pickford *The Librarians* documentary
- Oct. 18 – Pickford *The Librarians* documentary
- Nov. 1 – Listen Deeply: Community Voices Film Fest – All
- Nov. 15 - Book Club Social – Suzanne/All
- Dec. 1 – Best of 2025 – Katie/Jenni
- Dec. 30 – Kick off Winter Reading Challenge – Katie/All



Democracy In Action in the Children's Library:

Library clerk Jeff Stamey does a wonderful job crafting "this or that" questions for kids to get real life experience with expressing their views and preferences through voting. Recently he created an opportunity for kids to vote on the theme for December's literacy-based bulletin board. The choices were: The Polar Express, How the Grinch Stole Christmas or The Mitten. The Grinch won, and now a Whoville-themed display is enjoyed by all

this month. Thank you to all the artistic clerks who work in Children's for their help in creating lively, fun, engaging bulletin boards each month. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

Salmon Tank Preparation: In collaboration with Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Agency (NSEA), the Children's Library will raise salmon eggs again in 2026. NSEA and library staff are starting preparations for the 250 chum eggs that will arrive in mid-January by filling the tank and treating the water. We will celebrate the arrival of the eggs with a program, offer several salmon-themed children's programs in

February and March, and culminate with a community release on Saturday, March 28. Thank you to Children's Programming Specialist Lesley Norman for coordinating this fun collaboration. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

INFORM & INVOLVE

Community Support: On Nov. 21, Puget Sound Energy presented Bellingham Public Library with a check for \$4000 to support the library's role as a vital community hub that serves as a local center for educational programming and resources, community convening, public safety initiatives and community resilience building. Thank you PSE! We truly appreciate this recognition and support of the library's commitment to strengthen our community. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)



One City: A LEGO® model of Whatcom Museum's Old City Hall is featured in the window of the Bellis Fair Library branch. The museum is asking for our community's help in [voting for this design in the LEGO® Ideas contest](#). If it receives 10,000 votes LEGO® will consider turning it into an official set. It currently has more than 5,000 votes. To participate click the link, or use the QR code on the pedestal of the display. The design was created by local LEGO® artist and LEGO® Master TV show contestant Brad Bergman. He created this Bellingham icon using nearly 3,000 bricks and submitted it to LEGO® Ideas. Old City Hall is one of three buildings that makes up the Whatcom Museum campus. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

THRIVE & GROW

Digital Services Contracts: At the end of the year a lot of time is taken up renewing contracts and getting invoices approved and paid for annual software and systems subscriptions. For example, this year we're doing a fourth amendment to the contract for Kanopy, and the capped cost is increasing from \$50,000 to \$67,500 because both patron use and costs increased substantially this year. Other databases with increases were:

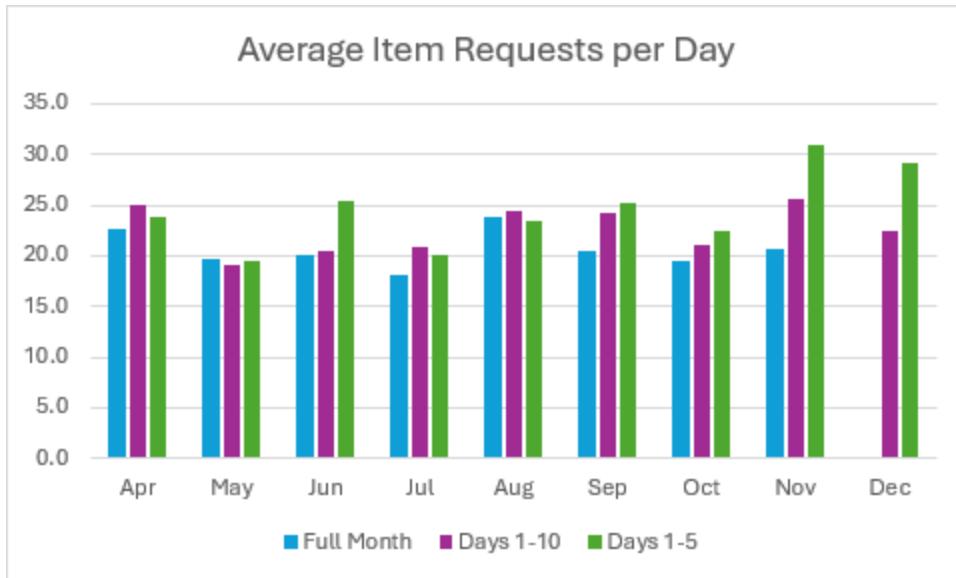
- Newsbank – up 3% to \$9,771.
- ProQuest – up 1.9% to \$9,895 for our genealogy package.
- Mango Languages - up 1% to \$6,162.41.
- ChiltonLibrary - up 5% to \$5,506.99.

Freegal is flat at \$23,500 for BPL's portion of the shared contract with WCLS. Other subscriptions with no increase were:

- EBSCO - \$9,296 for Consumer Reports and NoveList.
- Foundation Center - \$2,995 (paid by the Whatcom Community Foundation).
- Weiss Ratings - \$2,595.
- Reference Solutions - \$1,050.

I'm also working on getting a new contract for hardware and software support for the sorter, which is needed by the end of February. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

Item Requests: When we reduced the number of Item Requests allowed per patron per month from 10 to 5 this past May, we expected that our most enthusiastic patrons would start to front-load their requests to the first few days of each month. I believe we are seeing that behavior emerge now that we are a few months in. In May, July, and August there is very little difference in the Average number of Item Requests per Day whether calculated for the full month, the first 10 days, or the first 5 days. But in June, September, October, and November we see that the Average Requests per Day are higher for Days 1-10 than the full month; and higher for Days 1-5 than Days 1-10 (including in December). December and November in particular appear to be much more front-loaded than previous months. So it does appear that at least some patrons are shifting their requests to the early days of the month. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)



Branch Facility Updates: The Barkley Branch experienced unexpected "indoor showers" on Monday, Dec. 8. Thankfully the 10-15 gallons of water that burst through the ceiling near the front doors didn't damage any library materials. The water was determined to be an isolated issue. We're working with Talbot to ensure that the issue is resolved and the cosmetic damage is fixed. The Fairhaven Library elevator is awaiting an ordered part to resume service to the upstairs Auditorium. This model of elevator is difficult to get parts for, so it has taken longer than expected to find the replacement parts needed. We hope to see the elevator in full service by the new year. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Judd

Bellingham Public Library: Bridge Strategic Plan | 2026–2027

Purpose of the Bridge Plan: The Bellingham Public Library (BPL) Bridge Strategic Plan 2026–2027 provides a focused path forward between major planning cycles. Building on the goals of the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan, this two-year plan highlights key priorities that strengthen our facilities, enhance public access, and ensure sustainable funding for the future.

As the Library prepares for a new long-term strategic plan, these priorities reflect both our ongoing commitments and the opportunities ahead — to modernize our spaces, align services with community needs, and secure a stable financial foundation.

This plan also recognizes that Bellingham's size and the needs of our neighbors experiencing homelessness make it clear that our community requires more than one reliable indoor public space for adults seeking safety and stability during the day. As we navigate the Central Library renovation, BPL will collaborate with City, County, and community partners to support progress toward a long-term day shelter solution, affirming that the Library is welcoming to everyone while advocating for a broader, compassionate community response.

Strategic Priorities

1. Renovate the Central Library (2026–2027)

Goal: Complete the full interior renovation of the Central Library to create a modern, flexible, and welcoming space that reflects the evolving needs of our community.

Background: Following the success of the main floor renovation completed in 2021, the Library is entering its next major phase of renewal. The upcoming Central Library renovation will enhance accessibility, sustainability, and usability — ensuring that Bellingham's downtown library continues to serve as a vital community hub for decades to come.

Key Milestones:

- Complete design and construction of the Central Library renovation, including updates to the children's and teens' areas, public service points, staff workspaces, and building systems.
- Engage the community throughout the renovation process with clear communication about project timelines, impacts, and milestones to maintain trust and transparency.
- Manage service disruption during the Central Library closure by expanding open hours and services at the Barkley, Fairhaven, and Bellis Fair branches, ensuring continued access to core library services throughout construction.
- Reopen a renewed Central Library that supports inclusive programming, collaboration, learning, and connection — a flexible, welcoming space designed for the future of our community.

2. Advocate for a Community Day Shelter (2026)

Goal: Work collaboratively with City and County stakeholders to advance planning and support for a long-term day shelter for people experiencing homelessness.

Background: BPL is open to everyone and remains committed to providing a welcoming space for all. However, Bellingham's size and the scale of community need make clear that the Library cannot be the only indoor public place consistently available to adults seeking safety, warmth, and stability during the day. The temporary closure of the Central Library for renovation will intensify this need — and offers a critical moment to redirect communitywide attention toward durable, compassionate solutions.

Key Milestones:

- Partner with City and County leaders to support and advance planning for a dedicated day shelter.
- Engage the Library Board of Trustees, Friends of the Library, and community partners to elevate this need with local elected officials in a unified, compassionate voice.
- Ensure the public conversation centers on long-term solutions, not merely managing the temporary service shifts created by the renovation.
- Communicate clearly that while BPL welcomes everyone, the community needs a broader system of daytime support.

3. Update Level of Service Standards for Open Hours (2026)

Goal: Review and update the Library's Level of Service (LOS) standards for open hours to ensure equitable, convenient, and responsive access to all patrons.

Background: Building on the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan commitments to "Welcome & Include" and "Access & Opportunity," the Library will evaluate how its open hours across all locations align with current and future community needs. This work will consider population growth, usage data, and best practices to define consistent, sustainable standards for public access. The updated LOS will establish revised expectations for open hours that balance equity, demand, and operational capacity – ensuring that library services remain accessible and relevant to everyone in Bellingham.

Key Milestones:

- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of current open hours, population estimates, usage data and best practices.
- Develop and communicate a revised LOS framework with low, medium, and high service standards.

4. Develop a Sustainable Funding Model (2026)

Goal: Establish a long-term, dependable funding approach that supports BPL's operations and services.

Background: Building on the 2017 BERK study on Library Services and Funding Models, BPL will refresh its analysis of current and future operational funding needs. This work will explore mechanisms that provide stability while aligning with community expectations, evolving municipal planning efforts, and BPL's level of service standards.

Key Milestones:

- Revisit findings from the 2017 BERK study and conduct an updated assessment of projected operational funding needs.
- Develop a recommended funding framework that positions BPL to make timely, well-supported decisions in coordination with the City.
- Initiate phased next steps, supported by continued evaluation to ensure a sustainable and adaptable funding approach.

Looking Ahead: The Bridge Strategic Plan 2026–2027 positions the Bellingham Public Library to enter its next decade with renewed strength and vision. By modernizing our Central Library, advocating for compassionate community infrastructure, improving access, and securing sustainable funding, we continue our longstanding mission to connect our community with each other and the world.

The work outlined in this plan honors the progress made through the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan and prepares the Library to launch its next strategic planning process in 2028. As One City, together with our community, we will build a library system that is welcoming, resilient, and ready for the future.

DRAFT



2026 Annual Action Plan DRAFT

Library Board
December 16, 2025
Item #8
2026 Annual Action Plan

The **2026 Annual Action Plan — Renovation Edition** charts Bellingham Public Library's path as we modernize the Central Library, with careful oversight of timelines, budget, stakeholder coordination, and quality. Renovation-specific initiatives ensure staff support and uninterrupted service, while non-renovation priorities such as strategic planning, 2027 budget development, and citywide projects are gathered under Thrive & Grow, highlighting our ongoing commitment to a resilient and vibrant library for the community.

WELCOME & INCLUDE: We offer welcoming, safe places and experiences, where connections and understanding flourish.

- Support staff through the Central Library renovation with regular updates, collaborative planning, and opportunities for input to maintain connection across locations.
- Prepare branches for increased patron traffic by coordinating staffing, security, and safety procedures.
- Provide wellness resources, flexible scheduling, and team-building opportunities to manage workload and disruption.

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

- Design, plan, and implement a temporary service model ensuring continued access to holds pickup, research & referral help, meeting spaces, public computing, and browsing.
- Expand branch hours, adjust workflows, and allocate staff to manage increased usage at Barkley, Fairhaven, and Bellis Fair.
- Explore off-site programming, pop-up services, and downtown engagement opportunities.

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

- Provide programming for all ages with staff support in temporary spaces.
- Maintain patron access to collections through temporary storage and adjusted workflows.
- Support staff with training, equipment, and guidance for programming and collections in temporary spaces.

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

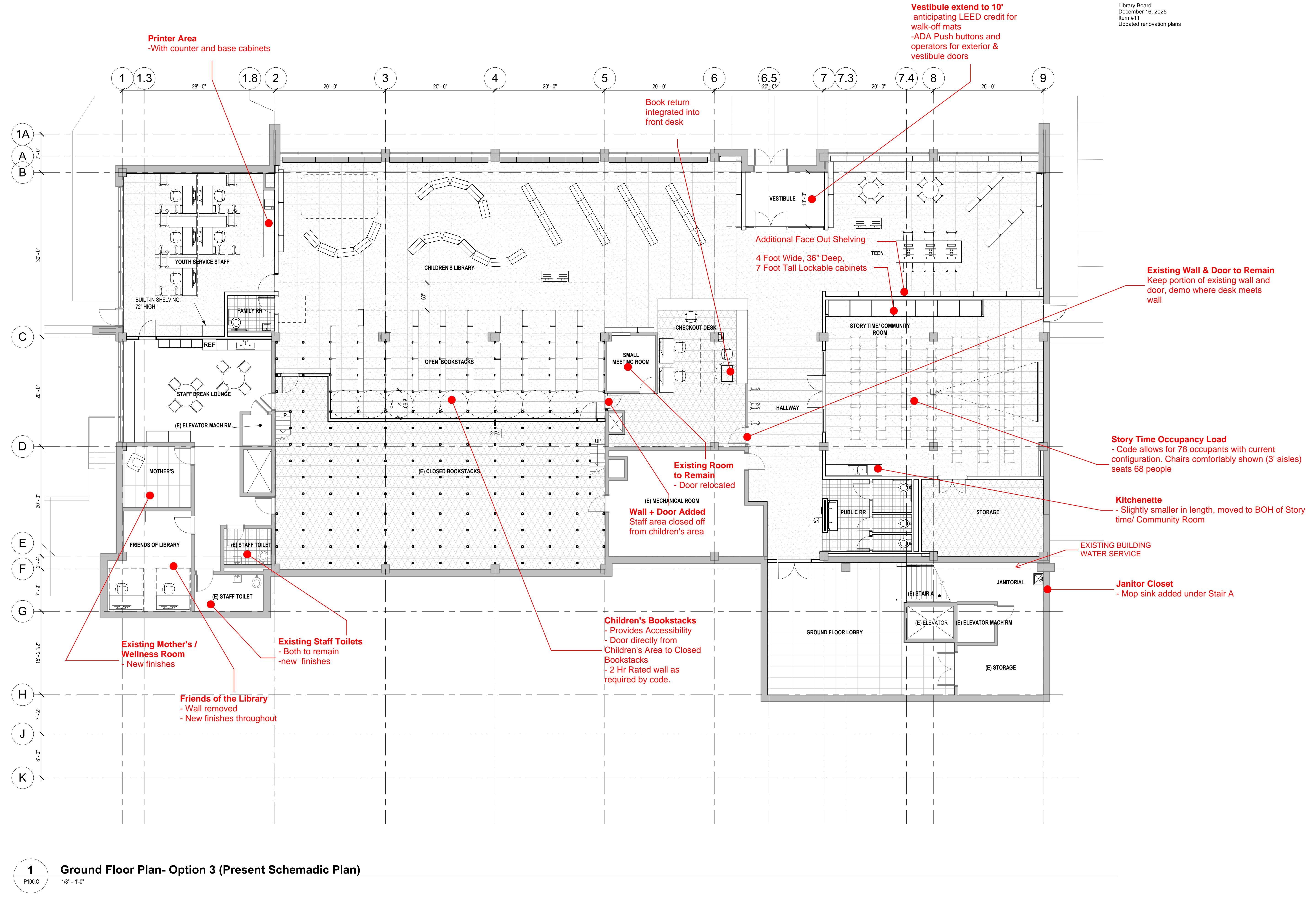
- Design, plan, and implement a comprehensive communication plan for patrons, media, community organizations, and City departments covering renovation milestones, service changes, and reopening timelines.
- Lead a major donor campaign to raise the final \$1.5M of the \$3.5M capital goal for the renovation, engaging partners and the community to support enhancements to the Central Library.

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

- Collaborate with City and County stakeholders to advance planning for a long-term day shelter space, ensuring BPL is welcoming to all while advocating for a broader, compassionate community response.
- Advance sustainable funding strategies for operations and capital needs, including review and update of Level of Service standard for open hours.
- Develop 2027 operational and capital budget requests.
- Implement staff learning hours to support ongoing professional development, skill-building, and knowledge sharing across all roles and work groups.
- Select new materials vendor and set-up preprocessing workflows
- Implement Citywide initiatives including Workday software, Teams phone migration, website accessibility compliance improvements, and updated City document retention procedures.

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12/5/2025



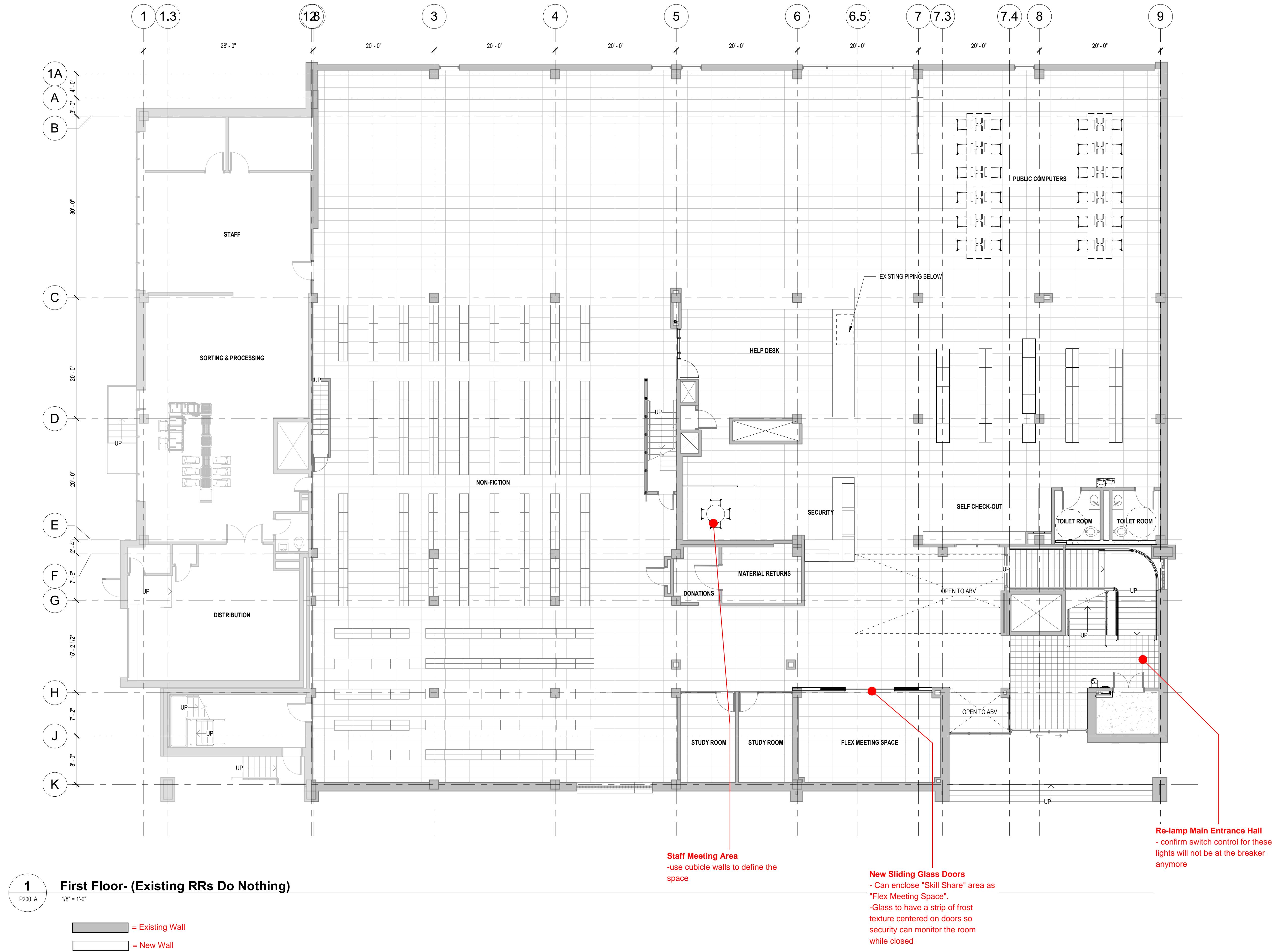
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Ground Floor Plan- Option 3 (Present Schematic Plan)

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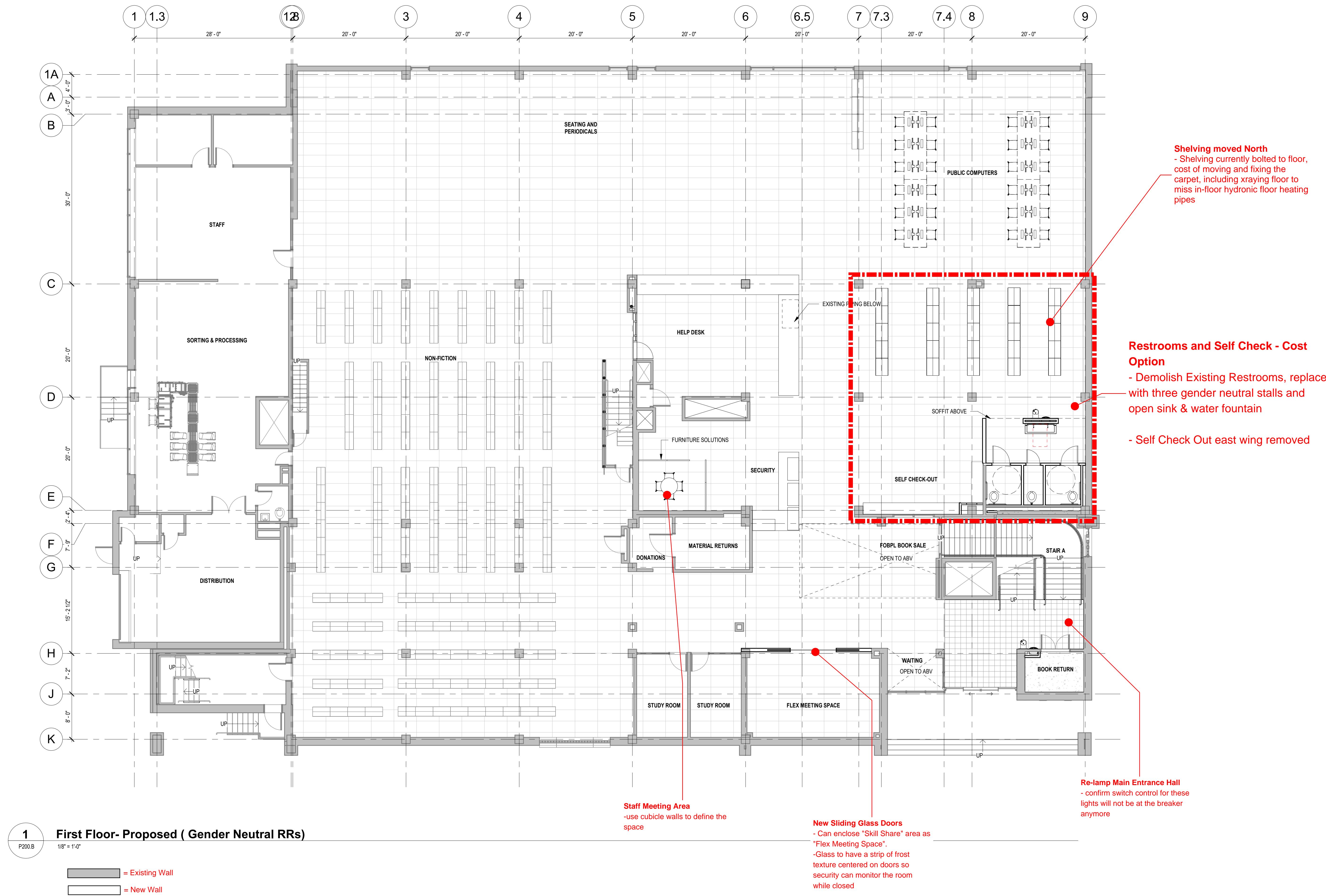
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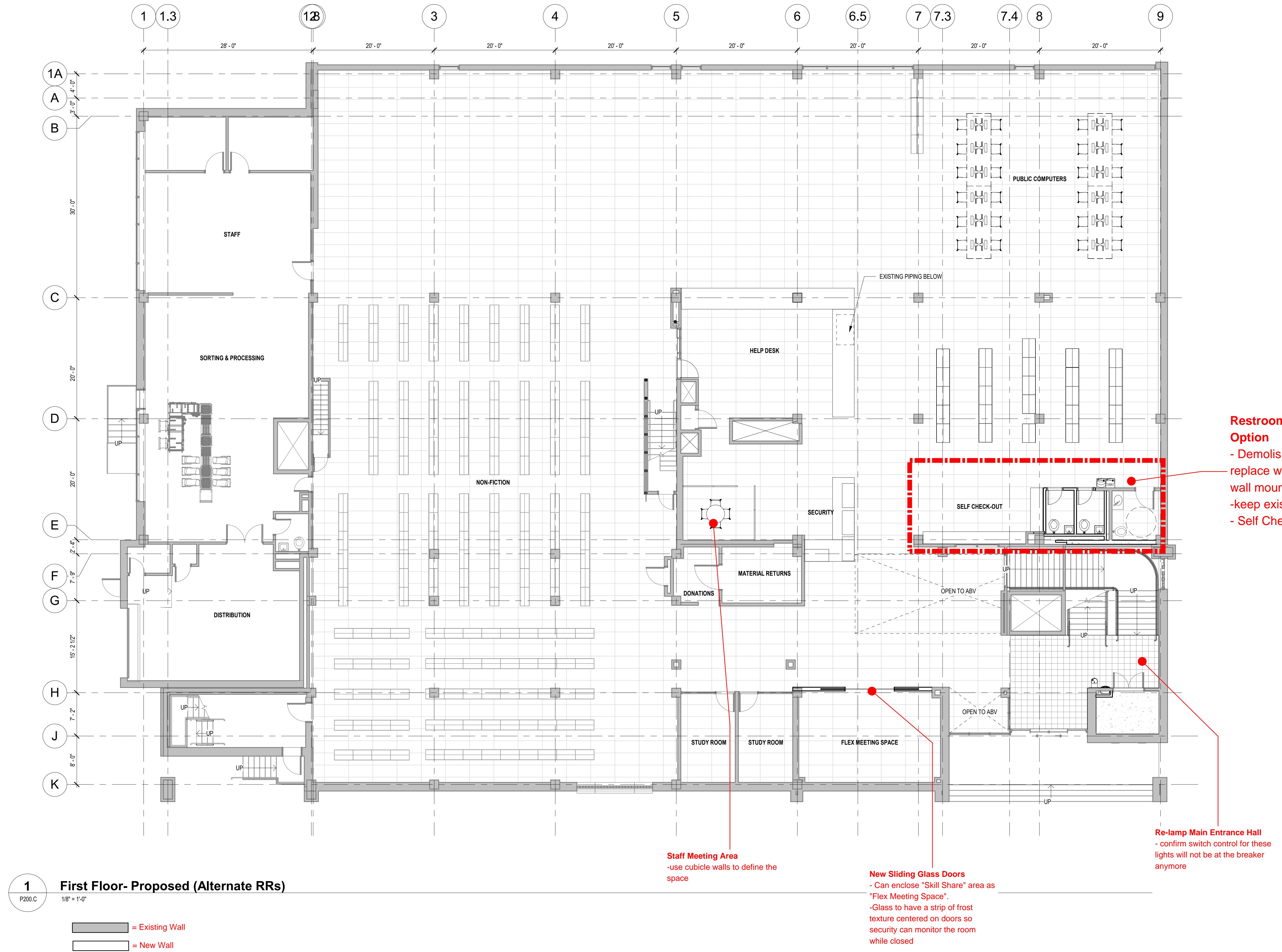
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