

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 and introductions | 1 min |
| 2. Approve/modify agenda | 1 min |
| 3. Public comment
This time is set aside for members of the public to make comments.
Remarks will be limited to three minutes. | 3 min |
| 4. Consent agenda (see packet materials)
All matters listed on the consent agenda are considered routine and may be approved in a single motion. A Trustee may ask that an item be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications and FYI• Minutes: December 16, 2025: Regular Board Meeting• Library performance & activity measures: December 2025• Financial reports
Claims: December 2025
YTD report: December 2025
4th Quarter Patron Use of Databases and Learning Resources
4th Quarter Donated Funds review | 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. 2026 Action Plan (see packet materials) – Action Item | 5 min |
| • Rebecca Judd, Director | |
| 7. 2026-2027 Bridge Strategic Plan (see packet materials) – Action item | 5 min |
| • Rebecca Judd, Director | |
| 8. Incident and Behavioral Health Data: Nov/Dec 2025 (see packet materials) | 10 min |
| • Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services | |
| 9. Mayor’s Office update (see packet materials) | 5 min |
| • Mayor’s Office Representative | |
| | Time check: 4:10 |
| 10. Central Library Renovation / Project Scope – Discussion and Direction | 35 min |
| • Rebecca Judd, Director | |
| 11. Fundraising Committee update | 5 min |
| • Fundraising - Kristy Van Ness, Vice Chair | |
| 12. Day Shelter Committee update | 5 min |
| • Day Shelter committee – Deborra Garrett | |
| | Time check: 4:55 |
| 13. New business | 3 min |
| 14. Agenda items for next meeting | 2 min |
| | Time check: 5:00 |
| 15. Adjourn | |

Accessibility:

The Bellingham Public Library Lecture Room is ADA accessible. Elevator access to the 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, February 17, 2026 – 3:30 p.m.
Location: Lecture Room, Central Library, 210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, Washington**



Communications & FYI

- *Bellingham Herald* **Dec. 27, 2025** [Yearlong closure set during renovations at Bellingham library's downtown location*](#)
- *NPR* **Jan. 7, 2026** [A 200-year-old book distributor is closing. Here's what that means for public libraries](#)
- *Salish Current* **Jan. 9, 2026** [A migrant's journey: Whatcom READS 'Solito' for 2026 - Salish Current](#)
- *Cascadia Daily News* **Jan. 12, 2026** [One year in, Lighthouse Mission's new shelter model a success*](#)

* This article link points to the Newsbank database. To read the article you will need to log in to your Library account using your Barcode Number and Password/PIN.



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, December 16, 2025 – Central Library Lecture Room
3:30 p.m.**

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

Board Members Present: Rebecca Craven, Kristy Van Ness, Kendra Bradford, Deborra Garrett, and Shirin Deylami
City Council Library Liaison: Hannah Stone
Library Management Staff: Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Katrina Buckman, Bethany Hogle, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Madeline Rosenvinge
FOBPL Representative: Carol Comeau, Friends of BPL Board Liaison
Guest Presenter: None

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

Approve/modify agenda: Rebecca Judd noted that the Draft Action Plan and Trustee Selection headings should be dated 2026 instead of 2025. Kristy Van Ness moved to approve the agenda. Deborra Garrett seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: No public comment.

Consent agenda: Shirin Deylami moved to approve the November 2025 Regular meeting minutes and the November 2025 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Kendra Bradford seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report: Rebecca Craven referred to the Year in Review summary (*see Attachment 1*).

Board member reports: Kristy Van Ness attended the Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee meeting with Rebecca Judd to discuss Library Board advocacy for a day shelter. She also attended the Civic Athletic Complex Master Plan Open House and noted that an online survey is available through the end of December.

City Council liaison report: Hannah Stone reported on the Civic Athletic Complex Master Plan Open House, noting that a library branch was mentioned as a future possibility. She thanked the Board for their hard work and stated that while she may not serve as liaison next year, she remains a resource and advocate for the Library.

Friends of BPL report: Carol Comeau shared that the Ridwell partnership resulted in over 300 children's books being distributed to Little Free Libraries. She praised staff collaboration and noted that another book sale is scheduled for late January.

Library Director report: Rebecca Judd reported on three recent Council votes: 2026 budget approval, Comprehensive Plan ratification, and Kristy Van Ness's reappointment to the Library Trustees. She shared that future board packets will include article links rather than full text, with NewsBank access for paywalled content. Parking passes from 2025 will remain valid until new passes arrive. Rebecca also noted efforts to streamline meeting minutes using Copilot as a tool and invited feedback. Kendra Bradford commended the extensive adult programming schedule.

2026 Board Trustee Officer Elections – Action Item

Deborra Garrett moved to approve Rebecca Craven as Chair and Kristy Van Ness as Vice Chair. Shirin Deylami seconded. Motion carried.

2026-2027 Bridge Strategic Plan (see packet materials) – Discussion

Rebecca Craven introduced the Bridge Plan, explaining its purpose during the renovation period. Rebecca Judd outlined four priorities: renovation, advocacy for a community day shelter, updating service standards for open hours, and developing a sustainable funding model. Board members discussed challenges, the need for consistent branch hours, and revisiting the 2017 BERK funding study. The Bridge Strategic Plan will return to the Board for a final vote in January.

2026 Draft Action Plan (see packet materials) - Discussion

Rebecca Judd presented the draft Action Plan, noting its focus on the Central Library interior renovation. Key areas include:

- **Welcome and Include:** Supporting staff through changes
- **Access and Opportunity:** Maintaining core services and expanding branch hours
- **Read and Learn:** Programming and collection access
- **Thrive and Grow:** Advocacy for day shelter, sustainable funding, and updating level of service standards for open hours.

Staff Safety and Mental Health/Welcoming Public Space update: Deborra Garrett reported on advocacy efforts for a community day shelter. The informal working group (Deborra, Rebecca, Carol, Kristy) is meeting with City and County staff to learn more and explore solutions. Encouraging news includes potential County funding. Board members discussed examples from other communities and emphasized the urgency of addressing shelter needs.

2026 Budget Update: Rebecca Judd reported that the final City budget was approved December 8. She expressed concern about salary savings estimates and noted the impact of Sunday closures.

Central Library Renovation Update: Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Caleb Savage continue weekly project meetings. Work includes budget planning, Bellis Fair space evaluation, grant preparation, and design revisions with Miller Hull. A detailed timeline is expected in January. Bethany Hoglund is forming a youth advisory group for input on the renovated space. Fundraising efforts are ongoing, with a capital campaign kickoff scheduled for January.

New Business:

- None.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- None.

Meeting adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting January 20, 2026 – Central Library Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST
Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

2025 year in review

This past year saw us say farewell to our outgoing Chair, Rick Osen, and completing the application process and appointment of Shirin Deylani who joined us in February.

In February, we discussed at length how we could leverage the earnings from the Bragg-Muldraw endowment held by the Whatcom Community Foundation to be used for the Central Library renovation. We requested that WCF facilitate this by transferring \$1,589,093 (or the current value) from the endowment's earnings account into a short-term investment account, ensuring funds are available for project-related expenses if/when needed. The documents setting up that agreement were signed in March.

Whatcom Reads was again a successful effort, incorporating music for the first time into the Whatcom reads events.

March also gave us the first wave of budget related decisions, forecasting some lean budget years for the foreseeable future. We met in a special meeting to go over the Mayor's request for budget reduction exercise and the Central Library renovation. We learned of the impacts of the elimination of federal Institute for Museum and Library Services funding on the Washington State Library. By June, that request had morphed into a request for 5% and 10% reduction exercises.

Library Giving Day saw the highest amount donated on any Giving day yet – a great start to fundraising for the Central Library renovation.

We hosted a presentation from Christine Perkins, the Director of WCLS, who talked about their upcoming levy increase request and the impacts to services if it were to fail. Spoiler alert: It did not fail!!

BPL was awarded grants of \$2M and \$1,030,000 for the Central Library renovation.

Library Board and staff and members of the Friends worked on getting library services and needs and day shelter needs into language included in the City's latest comp plan update.

The efforts of our Fundraising committee, Rebecca and former trustee Rachel Myers brought about establishment of a process and set of forms for individuals who might be interested in making bequests to the library in their estate planning.

We entered into a license agreement for additional space in Bellis Fair Mall for a short-term expansion during the Central Library renovation to provide additional collection space and storytime/programming space.

Bellingham Public Library - Performance & Activity Measures, December 2025

	December		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	1,779	703	20,156	21,005	-4.04%
Electronic copies purchased by BPL	404	211	1,527	1,751	-12.79%
Physical copies withdrawn from the collection	396	421	(21,811)	(20,838)	4.67%
Total physical holdings			179,170	183,828	-2.53%
Total electronic holdings available to BPL			177,778	167,328	6.25%
Total Holdings (Physical and Electronic)			356,948	351,156	1.65%
Circulation - Number of items checked out or renewed; includes Interlibrary Loan and Outreach activity					
Central Library					
Adult	36,989	40,977	455,941	492,673	-7.46%
Youth	36,990	39,671	479,641	496,806	-3.46%
Sub-Total Central	73,979	80,648	935,582	989,479	-5.45%
Fairhaven Branch					
Adult	5,260	4,887	59,236	58,545	1.18%
Youth	2,978	2,461	34,522	31,475	9.68%
Sub-Total Fairhaven	8,238	7,348	93,758	90,020	4.15%
Barkley Branch					
Adult	5,249	4,599	55,171	55,035	0.25%
Youth	4,744	4,759	60,824	51,617	17.84%
Sub-Total Barkley	9,993	9,358	115,995	106,652	8.76%
Bellis Fair Branch					
Adult	1,177	1,091	15,815	14,155	11.73%
Youth	1,716	1,986	22,941	23,150	-0.90%
Sub-Total Bellis Fair	2,893	3,077	38,756	37,305	3.89%
Bellingham Technical College					
Adult	10	15	393	387	1.55%
Youth	0	0	48	45	6.67%
Sub-Total BTC	10	15	441	432	2.08%
Whatcom Community College					
Adult	121	171	1,922	1,847	4.06%
Youth	18	17	295	292	1.03%
Sub-Total WCC	139	188	2,217	2,139	3.65%
Western Washington University					
Adult	304	214	3,060	2,448	25.00%
Youth	92	79	853	872	-2.18%
Sub-Total WWU	396	293	3,913	3,320	17.86%
Sub-Total Physical	95,648	100,927	1,190,662	1,229,347	-3.15%
Online Services					
Kanopy	2,187	1,857	24,354	21,547	13.03%
WA Anytime Library Overdrive	41,149	40,816	489,442	483,801	1.17%
Overdrive Magazines	9,087	6,997	98,673	73,975	33.39%
Sub-Total Online	52,423	49,670	612,469	579,323	5.72%
Total Circulation	148,071	150,597	1,803,131	1,808,670	-0.31%
Holds Activity					
Items placed on hold shelf	28,945	29,254	580,939	605,958	-4.13%
Services					
Persons Visiting - Number of persons counted as they enter the libraries					
Central Library	27,180	29,306	375,270	330,366	13.59%
Fairhaven Branch	3,089	2,997	39,406	34,048	15.74%
Barkley Branch	2,684	2,018	32,449	27,553	17.77%
Bellis Fair Branch	1,894	1,936	24,893	22,588	10.20%
Total Persons Visiting	34,847	36,257	472,018	414,555	13.86%
Website Visits					
This count reflects number of visits to www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org	43,327	39,760	510,480	498,040	2.50%
Bibliocommons visits					
This count reflects number of visits to Bibliocommons	46,167	26,843	331,039	379,866	-12.85%
Total Website Visits	89,494	66,603	841,519	877,906	-4.14%
Computer Usage - Number of sessions					
Central Library					
Adult & Teen (30 terminals)	2,894	3,526	39,828	38,140	4.43%
Childrens (3 terminals)	51	74	1,025	868	18.09%
Fairhaven Branch (6 terminals)	264	222	2,893	2,798	3.40%
Barkley Branch (4 terminals)	157	120	1,628	1,849	-11.95%
Bellis Fair Branch (4 terminals)	111	119	1,691	1,433	18.00%
Total Computer Usage	3,477	4,061	47,065	45,088	4.38%
New Borrowers Registered					
Central Library	486	456	8,841	7,945	11.28%
Fairhaven Branch	16	23	423	429	-1.40%
Barkley Branch	17	13	334	342	-2.34%
Bellis Fair Branch	40	50	539	585	-7.86%
Total New Borrowers Registered	559	542	10,137	9,301	8.99%
Programs - Library sponsored or co-sponsored educational, recreational, or cultural programs					
Programs	61	58	1,315	1,062	23.82%
Attendees	2,245	1,608	29,761	28,863	3.11%
Volunteer Hours	299	237	4,818	5,110	-5.71%

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

DECEMBER 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 JANUARY 20, 2026, IN ACCORDANCE WITH RCW 27.12.210 AND 27.12.240.

	VENDOR	AMOUNT
Materials, Equipment and Supplies		
Key replacement	Accurate Lock and Key	4.80
Books; DVDs; supplies; child masks	Amazon	8,395.59
Books	Baker & Taylor	888.60
Office chairs	Blackburn Office Furniture	3,262.81
Computer hardware	Bridge Data Solutions	2,881.69
Books	Building Decarbonization Coalition	21.11
Staff recognition	Canva	45.24
Cables	CDW	250.05
Books	Center Point Large Print Books	99.48
Lost Interlibrary loan	City of Tigard	29.00
Water (Barkley & Bellis Fair Branches)	Clearwater	10.63
Periodicals	Consumer Reports	28.34
Furniture and pre-processing supplies	Demco	455.38
Barcode scanner	Ebay	163.39
Moving Blanket	Harbor Freight	45.75
City Directory	Info USA	352.08
Books	Ingram Library	34,081.33
Books	Library Ideas	2,023.10
DVDs, CDs, recorded books	Midwest Tape	4,120.62
Vehicle fuel	Nelson-Reisner Distributor	437.44
Office supplies	ODP Business Solutions	431.56
Staff Learning Day Food	Old World Deli	388.74
Books	Playaway Products	119.02
ILL Shipping Supplies	Uline	987.25
Staff milestone anniversaries	Village Books	385.48
	Materials, Equipment & Supplies Sub Total	\$59,903.68
Services and Interfund Charges		
Barkley Branch cleaning	Action Cleaning	1,444.22
Memberships; PLA Stats; webinar; PLA registrations	American Library Association	215.00
Hotspot service	AT&T	36.98
Preprocessing	Baker & Taylor	306.74
Preprocessing	Barbizon	1,075.63
Self-check Software Subscription	Bibliotheca	11,188.04
Pest mangement	Biobug	441.45
Core subscription	Bluebeam Inc	359.70
RFP ad	Cascadia Newspaper	117.25

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

DECEMBER 2025 CLAIMS

Natural gas service	Cascade Natural Gas	3,168.63
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	1,658.54
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	3,154.71
Playbook ad	City of Bellingham Parks department	1,250.00
Water/Sewer/SSW service (Central & Fairhaven)	City of Bellingham Interfund	4,017.79
Barkley & Bellis Fair branch water cooler rentals	Clearwater Systems	37.41
Copies	Copiers Northwest	31.96
Printing business cards	Copy Source	119.90
Preprocessing	DEMCO	6,042.71
Alarm system monitoring	Guardian Security	176.10
Preprocessing	KAPCO	9,816.66
Graphic Design	Katrina Lyon Design	382.50
Copier leases and copies	Kelley Create	1,422.37
Bellis Fair Waste Disposal	L&L Mall Facility	1,353.84
Preprocessing	Midwest Tape	616.69
eBooks, eAudiobooks	Overdrive Inc	39,556.89
Bellis Fair internet service	Pogozone Wireless	358.49
Electric	Puget Sound Energy	7,092.84
Bellis Fair Branch Cleaning	Sealx	2,550.60
Digital subscription	Seattle Times	19.96
Preprocessing	Sticky Business	1,616.48
Barkley Branch operating costs	Talbot Services LLC	533.33
Microfische machine lease	Technology Unlimited	1,020.24
Borrower notices	Unique Management	531.30
Hotspot service	Verizon Wireless	1,600.40
Membership fees	Washington Library Association	1,503.00
Use Tax	WSDO	730.03

Services and Interfund Charges Sub Total \$228,362.23

Gift Fund

Books, programming supplies	Amazon.com	375.34
Staff appreciation event food	Avenue Bread	547.07
Hats for staff	Bellingham Promotional	1,986.31
Winter Reading Prizes	Canva	185.30
Adult Programming Printing	Capitol City Press	327.46
Staff appreciation event food	Community Food Coop	95.92
Staff appreciation event food	Costco	64.94
Books	Ingram	3,559.21

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Board of Library Trustees

DECEMBER 2025 CLAIMS

Family Programming supplies	Lowe's	10.86
Expense reimbursement	Mandee Palmer	31.96
Audiobooks	Midwest Tape	1,137.66
Staff Learning Day Food	Old World Deli	1,500.00
eBooks, eAudiobooks	Overdrive Inc	144.26
Chuckanut Reader	Village Books	500.00

GIFT FUND OUTLAYS Sub Total \$10,466.29

Total General Fund claims 288,265.91

Total General Fund & Gift Fund claims 298,732.20



City of Bellingham

Library - Budget to Actual - General Fund

December 2025 100% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Grants	2,794	0		
Print and Copy Fees	19,617	15,000	(4,617)	131%
Lost, Damage & Non-resident Borrower Fees	9,213	16,100	6,887	57%
Fairhaven Auditorium Rental Fees		5,000	5,000	0%
Miscellaneous Revenues	1,030	0	(1,030)	
Total Revenue	32,654	36,100	3,446	90%
Expenses				
Salaries and Wages	3,442,816	3,519,234	76,418	98%
Personnel Benefits	1,395,172	1,368,283	(26,889)	102%
Physical Materials, Equipment and Supplies	271,331	307,932	36,601	88%
Services, Digital Materials and Interfund	2,594,515	2,672,160	77,645	97%
Total Expenditure	7,703,833	7,867,608	163,775	98%

Library - Budget to Actual - Gift Fund

December 2025 100% YTD

	YTD Actuals	Budget	Remaining	% Complete
Revenues				
Donations	101,403	150,000	48,597	68%
Total Revenue	101,403	150,000	48,597	68%
Expenses				
Gift Fund expenses	94,043	150,000	55,957	63%
Total Expenditure	94,043	150,000	55,957	63%

Patron Use of Databases and Learning Resources

Vendor	Database	Metric	2024	2025	2025	2025	2025			Q4 TOTAL	Year-to- Year %
			Q4 TOTAL	Q1 TOTAL	Q2 TOTAL	Q3 TOTAL	Oct	Nov	Dec		
Candid	Foundation Directory Online#	Profile Views	465	241	553	338	413	105	160	678	45.8%
Data Axle	Reference Solutions*	Detail Records Viewed, Downloaded, and Printed	4	-	7	42	8	6	-	14	250.0%
EBSCO	Consumer Reports	Page Views	10,816	10,183	9,029	8,401	2,283	3,235	2,334	7,852	-27.4%
EBSCO	Ethnic Diversity Source	Requests	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-100.0%
EBSCO	NoveList Plus	Requests	43	87	124	218	25	15	31	71	65.1%
EBSCO	NoveList K-8 Plus	Requests	4	-	35	12	-	16	11	27	575.0%
Gale	Gale databases	Item Requests	574	444	409	925	826	595	3,179	4,600	701.4%
Gale	ChiltonLibrary.com	Retrievals	293	238	261	234	48	36	33	117	-60.1%
Grey House	Weiss Financial Ratings	Page Views	315	481	1,873	1,160	219	79	161	459	45.7%
Library Ideas	Freegal	Songs Streamed or Downloaded	28,849	27,676	25,489	27,992	13,639	17,427	15,206	46,272	60.4%
LinkedIn	LinkedIn Learning	Video Views	1,944	2,915	2,163	4,858	1,637	1,222	953	3,812	96.1%
Mango	Mango	Sessions	1,447	1,555	1,506	1,866	564	587	598	1,749	20.9%
NewsBank	NewsBank^	Documents Viewed	7,962	11,293	13,231	12,341	3,991	4,046	4,574	12,611	58.4%
ProQuest	Ancestry Library Edition#	Document Views	1,912	2,383	966	635	619	718	467	1,804	-5.6%
ProQuest	CultureGrams	Pages Viewed	59	9,693	815	97	746	106	144	996	1588.1%
ProQuest	HeritageQuest	Records Viewed	430	476	346	333	1,103	339	277	1,719	299.8%
ProQuest	US Newsstream & US Dailies	Retrievals	763	930	1,104	2,388	926	1,525	1,929	4,380	474.0%
ProQuest	Newspapers.com - West	Retrievals	2,717	3,335	3,779	2,098	530	1,273	1,101	2,904	6.9%
TOTAL			58,601	71,930	61,690	63,938	27,577	31,330	31,158	90,065	

No remote access

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

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

QUARTERLY DONATION REPORT for LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2025 - 4th Quarter Donations to Library Gift Fund

Date	Received from:	Amount	Purpose:
10/13/2025	Birchwood Garden Club	\$200.00	Gardening books
11/18/2025	Individual	\$50.00	Unrestricted
11/22/2025	Robert Layne	\$200.00	Adult Materials
12/2/2025	PSE	\$4,000.00	Programming
12/11/2025	Richard & Helen Scholtz	\$3,000.00	Children's Materials
12/31/2025	Misc donations Oct-Dec	\$39.62	Unrestricted
TOTAL		\$7,489.62	

2025 - 4th Quarter Donations to Library Funds at Whatcom Community Foundation

Date	Received from:	Amount	Fund
10/1/2025	16 Individuals, Grants, Etc.	\$180,111.02	Central Library Renovation Fund
10/1/2025	8 Individuals	\$1,400.00	Unrestricted
10/29/2025	Individual	\$50.00	Materials
12/17/2025	Individual	\$20.00	Capital
10/1/2025	Individual - \$15 Monthly	\$60.00	Renovation
10/1/2025	Individual - \$50 Monthly	\$200.00	Renovation
10/15/2025	Individual - \$50 Monthly	\$150.00	Renovation
10/8/2025	Individual - \$125 Monthly	\$375.00	Renovation
10/13/2025	Individual - \$25 Monthly	\$75.00	Unrestricted
11/2/2025	Individual - \$50 Monthly	\$150.00	Unrestricted
TOTAL		\$182,591.02	

2025 - 4th Quarter Gift Fund balances (as of 1/15/26)

<u>Whatcom Community Foundation</u>		
Bragg - Muldrow Endowment - Spendable portion (Jan. 2026 Disbursement)		\$262,715.72
Capital (\$121,627 designated for Fairhaven Branch capital improvements)		\$123,250.02
Fairhaven Branch Materials		\$5,696.71
Materials		\$16,877.41
Unrestricted		\$3,111.50
Library Giving Day 2024 (Unrestricted)		\$134.95
Central Library Renovation Fund		\$1,829,443.88
	TOTAL	\$2,241,230.19
<u>Library Gift Fund</u>		
(Variety of designated funds, including \$33,297.73 earmarked for renovation print/marketing and 2026 Bellis Fair (Champs) lease payments)		\$95,485.64
	GRAND TOTAL	\$2,336,715.83
Designated Endowment Fund (Held at WCF, principal total)		\$77,566.14



DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR January 15, 2026

This month's report reflects a busy and positive start to the year at the Library. You'll find updates on welcoming new staff, expanded security coverage, and outreach efforts that continue to connect more community members with library materials and services. We're also excited to share examples of strong community engagement and enthusiasm, from sold-out author events to hands-on learning with the return of salmon eggs. Along the way, staff are steadily moving forward on key operational work and renovation planning that will shape what's next for the Library. (Rebecca Judd, Library Director)

WELCOME & INCLUDE

Security Staff Update: Security Supervisor Cam Birman has returned and has jumped right into some important projects. On Friday, January 16, he and the Security team welcomed new Security and Information Attendant, Nathan Chaokhruembong. Nathan has been a valued COB Public Works employee for several years. He joins the team in a full-time position. This adds an additional 20 attendant hours per week, bringing the team to a total of 160 attendant/specialist hours per week. The additional capacity will allow the City Security division to begin regular patrols of City Hall, beyond the work they already do to keep the Library and Lee Memorial Park safe and welcoming. The Library and the Security team are excited to have Nathan on board. Please join us in welcoming him. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Security Contracts Update: Public Works has awarded the contract for after-hours security in Lee Memorial Park, Maritime Heritage Park, WayPoint, and parking garages to PalAmerican. They will begin after-hours security patrols in February. Public Works is still working on the purchase and installation of a new camera at the Library main entrance. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Library Assistant Staffing Update: We're welcoming three new Library Assistants to the team this month and have received approval to start the process to fill the last vacant position. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY

Outreach Update: The third quarterly collection of Outreach items was delivered to nursing and assisted-living facilities on January 13 and 20. The activity director of one of the facilities shared that "the residents were so excited about new books and spent a long time browsing and chatting about the new arrivals." Thanks go to delivery drivers Forrest Barlow, Kang Cheng, and Michael Nelson; Librarians Katie Bray, Liz Hendershott, and Rob Werner; and to Amy Lathrop and Bethany Hogle for contributing to the continuing success of this program. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Web Accessibility: We are working toward updating the content and form of our website to meet a specific accessibility standard by an April deadline now required by a Federal regulation. New tools have been provided by ITSD, and various third parties like the Washington State Library are sharing information on meeting the new requirement. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

RFP for Library Materials and Services: On January 6, the Request for Proposals (RFPs) for library materials and processing closed. We received seven bids. Jon McConnel, Katie Bray and I are scoring the responses. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)



Kanopy Authentication Change: While some new years see substantial changes to patron databases, this year saw just one. Library account authentication for the Kanopy streaming video service has moved from using EZProxy to using Overdrive's library account authentication system for both BPL and WCLS. The change makes for a smoother experience for patrons. Overdrive now owns Kanopy, and they asked for the change. Having this in place also allows us more granular control – for example, double-dipping is no longer allowed (BPL patrons using WCLS's Kanopy platform and vice-versa). (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

READ & LEARN

Connecting Readers through Author Events: On Jan. 5, Bellingham Public Library released 400 free tickets to the Feb. 6 event "Isabel Wilkerson: The Urgency of Radical Empathy" at Mount Baker Theatre. All tickets were claimed within 45 minutes, and within 24 hours more than 300 people joined the wait list. Paid tickets for the event have also sold out. BPL staff are working closely with Mount Baker Theatre staff to manage ticket communications for this event. In addition, "Whatcom READS: An Evening with Javier Zamora and Friends" on Friday, March 13 at Mount Baker Theatre is also sold out. A waitlist for this event is available through Mount Baker Theatre, by calling (360) 734-6080 or emailing tickets@mountbakertheatre.com. Information about additional Whatcom READS events is available at whatcomreads.org. BPL staff are involved in planning both of these major community events. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)



Welcome Salmon Eggs: On Monday, January 12, the library received 250 chum salmon eggs. In collaboration with Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA), we will care for the eggs and watch them hatch and grow until they are ready for release. This is the third season of raising chum salmon in the library as a community extension of NSEA's Students for Salmon program. Throughout February and March, library staff will partner with NSEA staff to present storytimes and programming for a variety of ages. On March 28 the salmon will be released into Whatcom Creek and we invite community members to participate in this joyous event at 12:30pm in Maritime Heritage Park. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

The Librarians to air February 9: The documentary film *The Librarians* will be shown on PBS February 9. Featured at the Pickford Theater last October, it chronicles librarians nationwide who are fighting censorship, threats, and harassment in their efforts to protect children's freedom to read. The film will be available for streaming on the PBS app and PBS YouTube channel as part of their Independent Lens documentary series. (Bethany Hoglund, Deputy Library Director)

INFORM & INVOLVE



MLK Day of Celebration and Service: The public is invited to the [annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Celebration and Service](#) on Monday, January 19, 2026, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at Sehome High School. It is a day to honor Dr. King's legacy through community service and action. This is a free event includes breakfast, presentations, songs and performances, local vendors, art, food, volunteer and service opportunities. This year's theme is "Mission Possible: Moving, Building, Uniting." Library Events Coordinator Miranda LeonJones serves on the organizing committee. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Media Stories: The Bellingham Herald ran a story on Dec. 27 titled "Yearlong closure set during renovations at Bellingham library's downtown building." The information was pulled from the Library's presentation to City Council in early October. Although the story was technically correct, the headline suggested that the Central Library's closure is imminent, and has caused additional questions from the public and the media, including KMG1. A story in the Salish Current titled "A migrant's journey: Whatcom READS 'Solito' for 2026" featured a nice overview of this year's Whatcom READS title, with quotes from BPL Deputy Director Bethany Hogle. The return of salmon eggs to the Central Library was included in the Jan. 12 issue of the Hamster Wheel community email. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Renovation Communications: We have begun weekly meetings to plan and discuss all communications related to the renovation project. This team includes representatives from the Library and Public Works. We are also keeping the city-wide communications team in the loop. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

Capital Campaign Committee: The Capital Campaign Committee held a kick-off meeting on Tuesday, January 13. Working closely with the Whatcom Community Foundation, the committee, comprised of library staff, Fundraising Committee Trustees and community member volunteers, will embark on the goal of raising \$1 million for the remodel project. (Bethany Hogle, Deputy Library Director)

PROS Plan: On Jan. 14, I attended the Bellingham Parks Advisory Board meeting and gave public comment thanking the Parks Department for including Lee Memorial Park as a Special Use Site in the upcoming Parks Recreation and Open Space (PROS) plan. I also mentioned how appreciative the Library is of the recent work by the Parks Dept. to clean up Lee Memorial Park, and that we look forward to future work to come. (Annette Bagley, Head of Community Relations)

THRIVE & GROW

Renovation Update: We're working through the project scoping exercise this month. While this work is happening, we have begun weekly renovation update emails to ensure that staff are kept informed of what is happening and what is coming up. We've also created a page on our internal staff Sharepoint site where updates, photos, and FAQs will be available for quick reference. We now have the keys for the temporary Bellis Fair Mall space, and we're getting quotes for the work required before we can begin using the space. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

Fairhaven Elevator Update: Since early November, the elevator at Fairhaven has been unable to access the upper level (Auditorium). It continues to access the lower level and main floor with no issues. Parts were ordered to make the repair, but we've been advised that those parts are on backorder with no ETA. Unfortunately, our elevator model has very limited replacement parts available. We continue to work with Parks to assist with ensuring access to the Auditorium for their scheduled users. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)

Bellis Fair Returns Box: I'm happy to report that the damage done to the returns box on Halloween has been repaired. The trucking company responsible for the damage paid promptly for the replacement piece and vinyl wrap. We were able to install the new top on the first non-rainy day after the holidays. (Jen Vander Ploeg, Head of Operations)



Bellis Fair Phones: Earlier this month we asked ITSD's NetOps team to change our four phones at Bellis Fair from using internal-only extensions to full 10-digit phone numbers. Since the branch was initially a pilot project we were ok with limited phone functionality for a time. But we recently discovered that if you try calling one of the internal-only extensions directly using an outside line as if it were a full number with our normal numbering pattern, you're routed to the Whatcom County Government phone system! With that additional knowledge in-hand we decided to convert the lines to full-service extensions that can be reached directly from outside lines. (Jon McConnel, Head of Digital Services)

Performance Review Pilot Project: Supervisor of Public Services, Michelle Becker, volunteered to incorporate feedback from her direct reports into her performance evaluation. With guidance and suggestions from HR, Kate Dunphy, and Bethany Hogle, I created a pilot survey. Twelve of Michelle's fifteen direct reports completed the survey and provided qualitative and quantitative feedback on fourteen measures across four performance factors. This feedback was incorporated into Michelle's annual review. The pilot was successful and may be applied to other Library supervisors and managers in the future. Thanks to Michelle for volunteering for this opportunity to learn from her staff and for the Clerks who shared their feedback. (Katrina Buckman, Head of Public Services)

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Judd



2026 Annual Action Plan DRAFT

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.
- Center youth voices by creating intentional opportunities for youth input to inform Central Library renovation design priorities.

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.

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

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

November - December 2025

Library Incident Snapshot	NOV	DEC	YTD
Abuse or destruction of property			8
Animal not under control			19
Camping	7	5	91
Disruptive behavior	3	3	118
Drug or alcohol use on site			10
Drugs or paraphernalia found	1	5	28
Excessive trash found*	165 gal	49 gal	399 gal
Human waste found / Public urination or defecation *	5	1	34
Medical emergency or person in crisis	1	1	32
Physical attack or fighting	1		5
Restroom misuse	0	3	25
Sexual misconduct such as exposure, inappropriate touching, or sexual harassment	1		6
Sleeping	3	5	58
Smoking/vaping or Sensor alarm	29	36	451
Suspected overdose			2
Theft		1	8
Violation of existing trespass/exclusion	10	5	98
Unattended property	15	6	137
Vandalism/graffiti	1	1	14
Verbal or physical threats and/or intimidation			14
Welfare/wellness check*	1		10

*Began tracking in summer 2025

Actions Taken	NOV	DEC	YTD
Verbal/written warning	43	43	542
Told to leave for the day	4	6	99
Exclusion Issued (1 week - 1 month)	1	2	80
Trespass Issued (3 months +)/Call to 911	7	2	68
Other calls to 911	5	1	62

HEART Contacts	NOV	DEC	YTD
Total Number of Individuals Served	57	33	780
Individuals that were Referred to Another (non-inpatient) Agency - Community Resource	43	20	489
Number of Individuals Entered into a more restrictive Setting (i.e. ER, Crisis Triage, Detox, jail, etc)	4	16	68
Total number of times (HEART Phone used)	33	10	374
“Non-Billable” Contacts*	50	45	445**

*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

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

Sample Incidents from November-December 2025:

11/3/25 08:10 – When a staff member arrived at the Library, they noted that there was someone camped under blankets at the front doors. They got another staff member as back up and went out to wake the camper (who had been camping earlier in the week). When they arrived, the camper was packing up their shopping cart preparing to leave.

11/8/25 16:41 – Security staff were patrolling exterior and walked in on a known male patron urinating next to another patron's car. A third patron was sitting in the car on the passenger side. The first patron stated he was sorry. Security staff went inside and conferred with Library and other security team members. It was noted that this patron had had several behavioral issues over the previous couple days with disruptive conducts, screaming, loud talking and boisterous behavior as well as possession of a knife a few weeks prior.

11/16/25 09:30 – Upon arriving to the library, a staff member encountered a known male patron and an unknown female patron completely blocking the staff entrance. Two carts were positioned to block access to the alcove with multiple personal items strewn about the ground. The patrons were seated/reclined upon the ground out of view of the street. The staff member used another entrance, and then opened the staff door from inside. The patron said, "Uh oh. I know, I know." At that point the patrons packed up their items and departed the staff entrance.

11/16/25 13:53 – Security staff heard shouting from across the street at the Public Defender's Office. They saw two regular patrons punching each other. Security staff called 911. After the call they noticed the patrons separated but had bloody faces. One patron was yelling that another had a knife and stated, "I am ready to get stabbed," while removing his shirt. Security updated dispatchers of the escalation. One of the patrons wandered around parked vehicles out front of BPL, then stood in the middle of Central Avenue, screaming and cursing. He threw his bike, striking a minivan, and dinged the front driver side door. He then approached main entry. Security staff shut down main doors to prevent the patron from entering in highly agitated state. They also closed the doors to the children's library. The patron continued to roam the front entry area, swearing and yelling until Police arrived @1400.

11/18/25 10:00 – Custodial staff sent security staff a photo of the exterior front entry showing cardboard was spread around the main door area as well as in front of the exterior drop box access. Custodial staff removed trash and other debris before opening. On the previous day, the BPL front exterior entry + plaza also contained large amounts of trash, abandoned cardboard and clothing items. Custodial and security staff had also cleaned the area that day, pre-opening, and collected 8-10 gallons trash in a plastic bag after opening. The exterior trash plaza side was filled to overflowing and there were several spots of biohazard (vomit) along the brick near steps to entry door. Custodial staff took care of biohazard and emptied trash again.

11/25/25 16:49 – A Security Specialist received a call about a disturbance in the upstairs restroom, when they arrived the HEART specialist and a Security Attendant were outside and related that the person inside had been screaming but did not respond to knocking. The Security Specialist asked if everything was all right, the door then opened and person exited. The patron was not speaking in an understandable way despite an attempt by security and HEART to make contact. He eventually made his way outside under the overhang to remain out of the rain while speaking to himself. 911 was called out of concern that the person may be having a medical issue. An officer responded and stated they had seen him around town today as well. The officer was also unable to understand or get any information from the individual. Security staff continued to monitor until the individual left the area, about 40 min later.

12/5/25 11:32 – Security got a call from Children's stating that a patron saw a man camping in the disabled stall. Two security staff entered the lower level men's room and I saw a known patron laying down in the disabled stall. Security asked him not to sleep in the disabled stall and told him he was welcome to stay upstairs. He exited out of the lower entrance and sat down with his belonging in the bike rack. HEART made contact to see if he needed assistance.

12/6/25 12:20 – Before open, security spotted a known patron camped in the Japanese Garden in front of the fire escape. They asked him to move from the fire escape so he wasn't blocking access. The patrons initially ignored the request, but moved after security asked him again around 30 minutes later. Camera footage confirmed that the patron had camped there overnight and had also urinated on the garden walls.

12/9/25 09:00 – While on morning rounds, custodial staff discovered a glass pipe with burnt residue near the recycling bins next to the staff entrance, and several hypodermic needle caps at the rear entrance. They also found and cleaned a human biohazard deposit near the recycling bins next to the staff entrance.

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

12/17/25 08:52 – While on morning exterior rounds, security staff found and disposed of several burned foil pieces left on the SW staff entrance stairs.

On 12/17/2025 17:40 – Library staff requested security to HEART area as a patron being assisted by Kell/HEART seemed to be escalating. When security arrived the HEART specialist was speaking to a patron who had a litany of issues that he continued repeatedly explaining in a moderately agitated fashion. HEART offered to contact crisis triage but the patron told her he was trespassed from their services. The patron then described a very specific way he would harm himself, and that he wished to go to the hospital. Security called 911 for EMS assistance. The patron willingly accompanied HEART and security outside the main entry to wait for assistance.

12/20/25 09:45 – While on pre-open rounds, security spotted two puddles of vomit in the front entrance sidewalk area. There was also a small amount of scattered trash and no bag in the West entrance trash can. Security called custodial staff to clean the puddles and then replaced the bag in the trash can and collected several pieces of litter from the entrance and plaza.

12/22/2025 07:55 – When arriving, security noticed a patron seated on flattened cardboard next to front entry landing trash can. Patron had shoes off with blankets and other personal items around him. Security noticed the trash beside him + east trash bin near bike rack were both packed full and overflowing debris. At 0810 Library and Security staff did a perimeter walk and found patron was still at main entry and it appeared as though they may have camped on BPL property. Patron said he had just paused there to rest but had not camped on property. Security explained the rules of conduct around camping and the consequences for future camping. Patron acknowledged and agreed to clean up his debris/belongings.

12/23/25 09:45 – Prior to opening, Security staff removed bedding, personal items, burned foil pieces and litter from the SW Staff Entrance. Library staff checked camera footage and identified the owner of the items as a known patron who had been warned about camping the previous day. Security staff bagged the items and left them by the dumpsters.



City of Bellingham 2026 State Legislative Agenda

Actively Pursue

Access to housing for all

The City supports as a top priority a range of legislative actions to reduce barriers and enable local efforts to create more – and more affordable – housing choices. These include but are not limited to:

- Support statewide prohibition on rent-setting algorithms.
- Support condominium reforms and incentives, key to expanding ownership opportunities.
- Monitor and support various proposals, such as subdivision code updates; modifications to elevator requirements; mobile dwelling unit requirements; protections for mobile and manufactured home parks; incentives for commercial conversions to residential; and other changes that encourage infill, accelerate housing production of all types, and expand ownership opportunities.
- Support for different housing models through siting, development permit processes and standards, and requirements for permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, or indoor emergency shelters ([HB 1195](#))
- Monitor and support proposed limits to number of properties corporate entities can own.

Addressing vacant buildings and properties

- Consider a land value tax mechanism and other attempts to address vacant properties by creating clear financial incentives to develop underutilized properties.
- Support other policy options and tools to support downtown initiatives and address encampments, illegal dumping and the extensive property cleanup needs they cause.

Funding for priority capital needs

- **Bellingham Municipal Court:** Funding to support renovation of former federal courthouse to house the court, expand services and further reinvigorate a historic anchor downtown building.
- **Day shelter needs:** Funding to support feasibility, facilities and operations for much-needed day facilities for unsheltered populations.
- **Bellingham Bay cleanup grants:** Preserve Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) funds, regardless of state funding shortfalls.

Actively Support

Fiscal sustainability, flexibility, and local options

Local government revenues are not keeping pace with the rising costs of delivering services, and existing options unfairly penalize lower income community members. The City supports progressive revenue options, and other funding opportunities, including but not limited to:

- **New options:** New strategies that offer sustainable, flexible, less regressive local revenue options.
- **Real estate excise tax (REET):** Collect REET in a graduated, more progressive manner. Strategically expand current REET without diluting existing priority uses.
- **Public safety sales tax:** Continue addressing barriers to implementing public safety sales tax.
- **Behavioral health facility:** Support Whatcom County request for flexibility in use of appropriated funds, to support more sustainable financial model and adapt services to community needs.
- **LEED certification:** Remove prescriptive LEED requirements from Commerce-funded projects, due to significant costs diluting grant funds directed to Bellingham library remodel.

Transportation, utility and other infrastructure needs

The City supports advancing policy initiatives and investments in transportation, utility and other infrastructure needs for our growing community. Key among our many needs include:

- **Priority maintenance:** Support additional funding for bridge and road preservation, as proposed in Governor’s budget. Advocate for protecting Public Works Board funding and other infrastructure funding sources, regardless of state shortfalls.
- **Nutrient regulations:** Enact wastewater regulations that are protective of Puget Sound and financially sustainable for ratepayers and residents.
- **Mitigation banking:** Improve regulatory timelines for mitigation banking.
- **Transportation interests:** E-bike and e-motorcycle regulations and enforcement, retail delivery fees, highway usage fees and other interests.
- **Fire training center:** Support planning and facility funding for regional fire training center.

Preserve and expand access to healthcare

Develop legislative pathways to foster more competition and preserve and expand access to healthcare.

Monitor

Other legislative activities

While this agenda represents key City priorities for the 2026 session, it is not comprehensive and is a living document. The City and its contract lobbying team are monitoring other activities and will support or oppose other emerging legislative priorities during the session.

Partner legislative priorities

The City values its local partners in public service, advocacy organizations representing specific service areas, and our tribal government neighbors. We support their priorities where needs and interests align.