



AUGUST 2021 LIBRARY BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE

From Library Director Laurie Orton:

The County Fair

It's time again for the SJI Community Foundations' fair grant program running from August 18th – 22nd!

After purchasing the property at 660 Spring Street using grant money raised during last year's fair, the Library is gearing up for design and planning for the new library, prior to a private and public fundraising campaign. To get started we're asking you to donate during the 2021 Virtual San Juan County Fair. We have lots of plans, and are eager to move forward on the project!

Building Project Costs

One question on people's minds is the cost of the project. What follows is an explanation for what the existing feasibility cost projections really mean—and what they do not mean.

A “maximal feasibility study” was independently conducted in 2020. The purpose of such a study, along with the cost estimates calculated, is to understand the upper limit of what is feasible on the property—it is not a budget, or a design. We may not, for example, need as much building space as is feasible, and instead opt for more outdoor space and parking. Those kinds of choices will affect the overall cost for the project and have not been made yet.

The two costs presented for the maximum-sized building that is feasible on the property came to approximately \$17.5 million *if* the building was demolished and we started fresh, and \$20 million *if* the existing building was kept and renovated.

The current library plan is to demolish the existing building, thereby reducing costs by approximately \$2.5 million. Furthermore, the library constructed on the site will be smaller than this maximal footprint, both to keep costs down, and because we want to ensure adequate parking and create usable outdoor space for activities and programs. These and other cost-reduction measures will be considered as we move into the planning and design phase in order to align the final project with a manageable cost for the community.

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We will pursue funding from different sources for the building project, including state and federal grants, public and private fundraising, and a community-voted bond. In the months to come, we will post more information about our plans for the next several years to build the new library. We'll seek the community's involvement so that everyone can better understand what is needed and what the future home for the library will look like.

Please consider donating to the library building project through the [SJI Community Foundation's link](#) during the 2021 Fair (August 18 – 22). After the Fair, use the Donate button on the Library Building Project webpage at <https://www.silib.org/library-building-project/>. It's all about your new library!

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