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Friends of the San Juan Island Library
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POSSIBILITIES

FALL 2025



STAY CONNECTED

**ATTEND ONE OF THE NEW
BUILDING PLANNING MEETINGS!**



a community meeting that will:

- ~ present the status of the new library building project ~
- ~ collect community feedback on library planning ~

**OCTOBER 22ND
12PM-2PM or 6PM-8PM
AT THE BRICKWORKS**

~ light refreshments served ~

~ come share what you want your library to be ~

more info at:

www.sjlib.org/aboutus/library-building-project/

UPDATE ON

**IMAGINE
THE
POSSIBILITIES**

THE NEW LIBRARY PROJECT

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

1

The San Juan Island Library is hosting public meetings this fall to gather community input on a new library building, ensuring the design is community-driven. You are invited to attend!

2

The Board of Trustees has determined to raise the bulk of the funding from private and public donations and grants.

3

Based on professional consultation, the Board has determined:

- The Spring Street property is large enough to accommodate multiple uses.
- We can also consider collaborating with community partners for services.
- At 12,000 sq ft, we can expand and grow our existing programs and services.
- Above 12,000 sq ft, we can provide new programs and services that align with community needs.
- An 18,000 sq ft building would fit comfortably, with ample parking, and outdoor gathering and play spaces.

NEW BUILDING TIMELINE

- ✓ September 2025: A Community Steering Committee was established to facilitate community engagement.
- ✓ **Public Meetings: October 22nd, 2025 at 12pm-2pm and 6pm-8pm** (attend one or the other)
 - The Steering Committee and architectural consultants will facilitate two public meetings to present the work that has been accomplished to date.
 - Everyone in the room will contribute input into the values, goals, and priorities for the new library building.
- ✓ **Public Meetings: November 2025** (dates and times TBD)
 - The Steering Committee and architectural consultants will facilitate two active and engaging design workshops. They will show how your self-determined values, goals, and priorities become physical ideas.
 - The results of this workshop will provide the design team with a basis for conceptualizing the building's design.
- ✓ **Public Meeting: January 2026** (date and time TBD)
 - The Steering Committee and architectural consultants will present a conceptual design of the new library building and solicit feedback from community members.
 - The Library will utilize the materials created for fundraising and outreach.
 - A projected timeline for the project, from start to finish, will be presented.

NEW LIBRARY BUILDING FAQ

Why Is A New Library Needed?

The Library is not meeting the critical needs of community members for smaller meeting spaces to participate in interviews, conduct legal and health telecalls, find isolated spaces for taking exams, and engage in quiet tutoring, among other essential services. We turn away many frustrated community members with these needs that are not met elsewhere in the community.

The Library lacks people-focused spaces, such as dedicated quiet areas and adequate room for browsing, navigating, and sitting among the stacks. The Library also lacks the requisite space for programming, particularly for larger programs that are standing room only or that we're constrained to hold off-site.

Parking space is lacking, leading to potential accidents and parking on the street.

Teen and children's areas are inadequate to prevent noise from reaching other areas of the Library.

Additionally, the Library lacks any outdoor green space suitable for hosting adult and youth programs.

What Statistics Illustrate The Current Library's Insufficient Size?

Of the 103 years of libraries on San Juan Island, 42 have been at the current location, which has expanded twice and is now out of room to do so again.

Over 400 children aged 0-11 participated in the Library's 2025 Summer Reading Program—a record-breaking number—with 69 tweens and teens reading a combined total of 1,574 days. However, our current building doesn't provide enough space for these age groups.

Physical materials continue to be the dominant format that people prefer, despite the ease of use of e-materials. Of the 156,280 checkouts in 2024, 73% were physical materials, yet we've had no room to grow the collections for years.

Over 6,000 library visitors on average per month. At certain times and for specific programs, the space is overwhelmed by the number of people, particularly after school.

In 2024, 10,578 participants attended 535 library programs, many of which were held off-site because of insufficient indoor and outdoor space at the Library.

Private meeting spaces are among the most frequently requested services that we are unable to provide.

NEW LIBRARY BUILDING FAQ

What About Affordable Housing?

The Library's Board of Trustees and the San Juan Community Home Trust are partnering to explore potential affordable housing solutions.

Partnerships for other types of non-profit and government services will also be considered.

Any proposal for affordable housing would require an outside organization to provide financing, purchase a subdivided property, to plan and develop, construct, and manage the project.

Stipulations include:

- The Library has front, street-side placement.
- Library requirements for building and outdoor space, parking, and future needs are not constrained.
- Proposals address the community's long-term needs for stable, family-friendly housing for year-round residents.
- Plans support and do not detract from the Library's goals for the property.

Why We Don't Plan to Use the Former Lifecare Center Building?

Based on information obtained from professional architects and construction managers, the cost to renovate the building and bring it up to code would be greater than constructing a new one.

The building is too large, and at least half would be demolished, even if it were to be used.

It was not built for, nor is it suitable to carry out, the purposes and functions of a library.

The building layout would require an increase in staffing, raising operational costs significantly.

We can remove the existing building and construct a new library specifically designed to meet our community's current and future library needs.