

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: May 21, 2024

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**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
**From:** Vice Mayor Zollman  
**Subject:** Library Ad Hoc Committee Report Out and Request for Consideration of Recommended Actions

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**RECOMMENDATION:** This item is to request Consideration of Recommended Actions from Library Ad Hoc Committee

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The Library Ad Hoc Committee was established June 20, 2023 and Vice Mayor Zollman is the City Council Appointed Member to this Ad Hoc Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee was formed to explore future possibilities for Sebastopol’s Branch, including but not limited to the issues of increased staffing and adequate facilities. The following members were appointed to the Ad Hoc Committee:

- Vice Mayor Zollman
- Sebastopol’s Library Commissioner Fred Engbarth
- Sebastopol’s Representative on the Citizens’ Oversight Committee Sarah Glade Gurney
- Sebastopol Branch Manager Mathew Rose
- Member from Library Advisory Board
- Member from Friends of the Library, the former non-profit community organization LANTERN
- Member from Library Foundation

The item tonight is to receive the Report from the Library Ad Hoc Committee and discuss the recommended actions in the report. It is also recommended that the Ad Hoc Committee be dissolved as it was created for this specific purpose. Depending upon the outcome of the recommendations, the Council could consider a new Ad Hoc for specific actions.

**BACKGROUND:**

The library has served as an anchor for the residents of the City and the West County communities since 1917. The building which presently houses the Sebastopol Regional library was constructed in 1975, shortly after the establishment of the Sonoma County Library. It has been a hub for economic and community advancement. It provides critical resources across employment, health, information access, civic engagement and social services for jobseekers, small businesses, immigrants, seniors, families with children, students and those bridging the digital divide. Significantly, during the recent Covid pandemic, Sebastopol's Branch Library provided "essential services" to its wide-ranging patrons, tending to their health and well-being.

A larger, modern and well-resourced library will contribute to the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of the community. The library supports people and the community through its civic presence. It provides information, supports learning and culture and is a focal point for a growing number of public services. The creation of an improved and expanded library will complement the impact of public and private investments and become an energizing force alongside ventures like businesses and services which will benefit from the new building.

Since the date of its formation the committee met monthly and published a weekly Blog on issues related to the library building and services. The committee approached its work though a participatory design process - an

approach to building spaces, services, and tools where the people who will use them participate centrally in coming up developing concepts and then designing the actual products. The Ad Hoc Committee brings forward this report tonight to the Council and community.

**ANALYSIS:**

Sebastopol has been called the "capital city" of the West County; this relationship is often minimized or overlooked. An expanded library will provide opportunities for an exciting new relationship between the City of Sebastopol and West Sonoma County. This partnership will create opportunities to address city-rural gaps in transit, food security, health and broadband access. Sebastopol has the opportunity, working with our partners, to design a modern, larger, more innovative and efficient building to meet the needs of our community and houses the library services.

It is recommended the City Council review the recommended actions, provide direction; dissolve the current Ad Hoc Committee; create a new Ad Hoc Committee to research and provide recommendations on the feasibility of the items below for creation of designing a modern library to meet the needs of this community and West County and appoint a City Councilmember to the Committee if created.

1. **Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD):** Tax increment financing (TIF) works by freezing the property tax revenues that flow from a designated project area to the city, county, and other taxing entities at the "base level" in the current year. Additional tax revenue in future years (the "increment") is diverted into a separate pool of money, which can be used either to pay for improvements directly or to pay back bonds issued against the anticipated TIF revenue.
2. **Sonoma County Library "Measure Y" Sales Tax:** In November 2016, 72 percent of Sonoma County voters approved Measure Y, a one-eighth of a cent sales tax to support the 14-branch Sonoma County Library system. The funds are being used to: Increase hours; Increase access; Expand collections; Expand programs and services; and Maintain library facilities.
3. **Development Contributions and Planning Agreements:** Local government areas experiencing significant population change as a result of new development can negotiate contributions from developers towards the cost of providing community facilities, such as libraries.
4. **Government Debt Issuance and Public Fund Investments:** Public agencies have a number of options when financing capital improvements and managing their cash flow, including relying on existing resources or operational surpluses. In some cases, and under certain conditions, debt financing is both the most economical and sensible means of financing both short-term and long-term purposes.
5. **Co-located Libraries:** Sharing the cost between a range of community services can assist in the funding of library projects. Some possibilities include classroom and training facilities for programs providing services to our older citizens, crisis response and community resilience, and social services, city council meetings, and .....
6. **Joint Use libraries:** This approach involves the development of a shared public library service between two or more distinct service providers, with funding provided by local government in addition to the joint service provider. Funding is being sourced from different authorities, and the development of detailed agreements on the joint use library service must be undertaken. *(Also see the examples in #5, above)*
7. **Commercial Development Opportunities:** Local government has the capacity to utilize its resources for community benefit. This may involve using existing resources more effectively or in a more commercial manner to achieve financial returns. When considering any of these approaches it is important to have specialist cost and financial planning advice and/or develop a business plan, and more.
8. **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** PPPs are collaborations between the City and a private enterprise that can be used to finance, build, and operate projects.
9. **State and Federal Government Grants:** Through agencies such as such as Institute of Museum and Library Services,<sup>i</sup> FEMA,<sup>ii</sup> and The California State Library and the like. Provide some assistance in grant identification,

application support, and training. State and federal grants provide support for a particular purpose including smart city projects, research, or strategic development.

**10. Philanthropic Foundation Grants:** Certain non-profit organizations and foundations provide grant funding to support Smart City initiatives including New America, the Kaiser Foundation, the Kaufman Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Knight Foundation, Arnold Foundation, and others.

SPECIAL THANK YOUs:

The Ad Hoc Committee would like to thank the following members who served; volunteered; and contributed valuable input into the Committee and the Final Report:

Helena Whistler, Past Commissioner and Sonoma County Public Library Foundation  
Mathew Rose, Branch Manager, Sebastopol Regional Library  
Kee Nethery, Chair, Sebastopol LAB  
Mary Lou Schmidt, Gravenstein Health Action Coalition  
Tong Lai Ginn, Sebastopol LAB  
Debbie Ramirez, Field Representative  
Supervisor Lynda Hopkins

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH:**

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to schedule meeting date.

County Supervisor Lynda Hopkins has stated she will be sending a letter of support. As of the writing of this report, the letter has not yet been received. Once the letter is received, it will be forwarded to the City Council and posted to the city web site.

Sebastopol Area Senior Center has submitted a letter of support (attached).

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact with receipt of this report or with the creation of a new ad hoc committee.

NOTE: There has also been very limited City staff time in relation to this Ad Hoc committee. Very limited staff time included hosting of zoom meetings and providing information when needed. In staff's opinion, the limited staff time utilized for this committee was not burdensome and was not an impact to the budget or workload. It is anticipated that if a new Ad Hoc Committee is created, there would also be very limited staff time involved.

**OPTIONS:**

If the Council does not accept the recommendations, the Council could receive the report only and dissolve the current ad hoc committee with no further action; or  
Receive the Report, approve creation of the committee, appoint a Councilmember and modify the duties of the committee

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Ad Hoc Library Committee Report  
Senior Center Letter of Support

**REPORT  
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL'S AD HOC LIBRARY COMMITTEE  
MAY 21, 2024**

**REPORT  
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL'S AD HOC LIBRARY COMMITTEE  
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*The end notes and citations who might ask "show me" and/or taking a deeper dive into some of the topic reviewed in this report.*

**REPORT  
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL'S AD HOC LIBRARY COMMITTEE  
MAY 21, 2024**

**I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

As the heart of our community and valued throughout the West County is our Sebastopol Library ("library"), and its dedicated staff, has served as a center of connection, devotion, innovation, and knowledge for generations. However, with changes in population, service demands and emerging technologies the time has come to envision a greater, brighter future for our library.

The library is a regional branch of the Sonoma County Library ("SCL"). The SCL is funded predominantly, by a parcel tax levied on properties within its jurisdiction. In November 2016, Sonoma County voters also passed a 10-year 1/8 cent sales tax dedicated to funding the SCL. Over 71% of the electorate approved the measure (Measure Y).

Within the SCL, the cities and the county provide the buildings that house library branches in their communities and the SCL provides staff, comprehensive services and outreach.

In a letter to then Mayor Hinton and the members of the Sebastopol City Council dated April 3, 2023, Erika Thibault, SCL Director, states:

I have listened and heard the request for *more staff, but the building simply cannot support it.*<sup>1</sup> Our recent Facilities Master Plan, which we provided to the City in 2022, states: "*Given the inadequacies of the existing building, it is strongly recommend that it be replaced with a larger branch of at least 20,000 square feet.*" This is compared to the 10,000 square feet now in use. (Emphasis added)

And later concludes,

As you are aware, library leaders have discussed the facility issue many times over the past few years with various Sebastopol Library Commissioners, City Councilmembers, and community members. I urge you to consider our shared responsibility as part of the JPA to provide comprehensive library services to the community with adequate branch facilities, and let's produce *a practical plan together which expands or replaces this well-loved, yet inadequate branch facility for all of our library lovers.* (Emphasis added)

On June 6, 2023, the City Council created an Ad Hoc Library Committee ("committee")

...to explore future possibilities for Sebastopol's Branch, including but not limited to the issues of increased staffing and adequate facilities. The local Ad Hoc Committee ("committee") would convene to discuss the issues, then, when prepared, invite representatives from the Regional Headquarters.<sup>2</sup>

Since the date of its formation the committee met monthly and published a weekly Blog on issues related to the library building and services.

The committee approached its work through a participatory design process - an approach to building spaces, services, and tools where the people who will use them participate centrally in coming up developing concepts and then designing the actual products.

We believe that our community members have rich knowledge about the current library both the building and its limitations and the services it provides. They know what works and what doesn't. Their expertise and input are valuable and will improve planning outcomes.

After a year of review, we agree with Director Thibault, the building and location of the library is too small and restrictive, both in staffing and in the size of the facility, to provide our residents and those within the library's service area with the full range of services which can be provided by a 21st Century Library.

*In a rush for time?* The results of our review are attached at the end of this Report as Exhibit A: Findings And Recommendations.

## **II. DISCUSSION**

**INTRODUCTION-A COMMUNITY HUB:** In its report, *Rising to the Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries*, the Aspen Institute asserts that the library's "physical presence provides an anchor for economic development and neighborhood revitalization, and helps to strengthen social bonds and community identity."<sup>3</sup>

Library buildings are a source of civic pride. Library spaces and programs bring people together. Library services—including volunteer programs and literacy programs—help people become more engaged with their communities.

Libraries are the only public spaces where people can find trusted information, community, and connection; borrow books, music, and "things" like laptops, musical instruments, and exercise equipment; access art, culture, sports, games, and technology; and get support for lifelong learning, health and wellness, job seeking and career development—all free of charge.

Our community is stronger when we work together. The committee's vision of the building which will house the Sebastopol Regional Library is one which will engage and connect people to essential services and information resources, and support new citizens, vulnerable populations, children, teens, our aging residents, job seekers, and entrepreneurs.

**How does the library contribute to our community?**

**A. HIDDEN GEMS:** Here are a few of the library's "hidden gems" which merit attention:



**1. Economic Value to the Community:**<sup>4</sup> Public libraries are one of the most cost-effective investments around.

In a recent Economic Impact Study,<sup>5</sup> Dr. Robert Eyster, a well-known and respected economist, keynote speaker at economic conferences, and since 1995 has been a professor of Economics at Sonoma State University and Economic Forensics and Analytics, Inc., found, among other items, that

Sonoma County Library generates economic impacts in three categories: Operations; Capital Improvements; and, Social Benefits/Household Savings

Sonoma County Library generates \$3.82 in value for each dollar invested, a 382% return on investment

Sonoma County Library has a lower per-visit cost (\$9.74) than the state average of \$12 per visit.

Public libraries, such as Sebastopol's, deliver a positive return on the funds invested in them. Every \$1 invested in a library yields between \$2 and \$10, with the most common return being between \$3 and \$6.

Libraries with a downtown location historically contribute a significant amount of steady foot traffic and daytime population and serve as trip attractions based on the number of daily, weekly and monthly users tracked by libraries.<sup>6</sup>

Public libraries also build a community's capacity for economic activity and resiliency. The shift in the role of public libraries — from passive, recreational-reading and research institutions to active economic development agents.<sup>7</sup>

The creation of an improved and expanded library will complement the impact of public and private investments and become an energizing force alongside ventures like businesses and services which will benefit from the new building.

Visible facets of the library's value include: (a) personal economic development for users (e.g., job search, resume writing, small business development, etc.); (b) the value of services provided by libraries during times of crisis response and how they contribute to community resilience; (c) the opportunity for users to enhance their personal learning and knowledge development; (d) the development of social capital in communities; (e) a strong financial return on investment; and, (f) the social value to vulnerable populations (e.g., persons experiencing homelessness, immigrants).<sup>8</sup>

It is the less tangible forms of value and social impact where public libraries hold unique value.<sup>9</sup>

**2. Power of Place:** The library and the power of space.<sup>10</sup> What is the power of place? It is the importance and impact of the physical presence of a public library. Whether on the town green, in a suburban strip mall, or on a busy city street, libraries bring more to their communities than books. And just like the communities they serve, libraries come in endless variations.

Public libraries are anchors in the communities they serve. Often, they are prominent and beautiful buildings in the towns and cities they serve. Even if not beautiful, they still serve as landmarks and reference points. Their physicality helps libraries serve their missions, provides support in times of need, and can represent their communities with pride. Often, they are the only major public space in a given community, and that is a critical role.

The library has served as such an anchor for the residents of the City and the West County communities since 1917.<sup>11</sup>

The library is a hub for economic and community advancement. It provides critical resources across employment, health, information access, civic engagement and social services for jobseekers, small businesses, immigrants, seniors, families with children, students and those bridging the digital divide.<sup>12</sup>

The library is a trusted space, integrated into the local community and accessible to all. It supports and facilitates education and skills development. Through the promotion of literacy supports, the library complements mainstream education and provides a space for children and adults to learn and develop. It is a resource for developing digital skills and literacy, it provides cultural and educational outreach programs that empower the community, facilitates community cohesion, reduces isolation and contributes to pride of place.<sup>13</sup>

A modern 21<sup>st</sup> century library<sup>14</sup> also supports economic development and the delivery of important local services.<sup>15</sup> It works in partnership with local agencies supporting business, enterprise and employment creation, linking people with jobs by developing employability skills and sharing job seeking supports.

The library brings people together, enabling social sharing among peoples and cultures, celebrating diversity and encouraging harmony. It facilitates personal development for all people, providing a range of supports which reduce marginalization of all types, including language learning supports; social and cultural activities; and support activities for digital technology learning, reading and literacy.

A larger, modern and well-resourced library will contribute to the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of the community. The library supports people and the community through its civic presence. It provides information, supports learning and culture and is a focal point for a growing number of public services.

Delivering a progressive library service that meets the expectations of the people it serves requires a library buildings that is fit-for-purpose and reflects the quality of services being delivered. It is important that the new library building have the appropriate space and layout to accommodate the full range of facilities, equipment and technologies required to underpin library services and support all types of users – for example, study spaces, adult learning zones, assistive technologies, innovation spaces.

In addition to the services provided to the residents of the City of Sebastopol the library is an important stop for residents of Bodega Bay and other coastal communities as well as from inland areas of Sonoma County.

**3. Invisible Infrastructure:**<sup>16</sup> Beyond books, the library is a top contributor to the economic and community health.<sup>17</sup> In general, public libraries, such as the Sebastopol library, are considered civic institutions<sup>18</sup> – they are funded by and are an integral part of the civic system of a specific state, county, or city. Public libraries serve their communities although they may differ in response to the size, location, and specific needs and resources of the community they serve.<sup>19</sup>

Today's modern libraries are hubs of community growth,<sup>20</sup> connecting to broad civic agendas<sup>21</sup> and boosting local economies by supporting development of small business and the workforce. Innovative library services yield huge returns on investment, presenting leaders with a tremendous opportunity to grow their economies.

**4. City-Rural Partnership:**<sup>22</sup> Sebastopol has been called the "capital city" of the West County; this relationship is often minimized or overlooked.

For many rural residents, libraries serve as primary centers for literacy and skill development. They offer free access to books, educational materials, and digital resources, fostering a culture of reading and curiosity among young and old alike.

An expanded library will provide opportunities for an exciting new relationship between the City of Sebastopol and West Sonoma County.<sup>23</sup> This partnership will create opportunities to address city-rural gaps in transit, food security, health and broadband access. The challenge facing governments is how to govern these interactions, which cross different administrative boundaries and policy domains. If well managed, city-rural interactions can help improve service provisions, as well as increase growth opportunities and quality of life in general.<sup>24</sup>

A City-Rural partnership with the County of Sonoma, combined with a new library building, provides the opportunity for the co-locating of some services and new sources of funding.

City-rural partnerships are important tools for better coordinating rural-urban interactions. They can be used to better design and implement policy at the appropriate scale, providing a flexible and inclusive approach that bridges different but interdependent interests. However, rural-urban partnerships face some specific challenges that may hamper their formation, and even policy, when designed without acknowledging the actual integration between urban and rural areas and can be an obstacle for the different actors to work together.<sup>25</sup>

**B. BRIEF HISTORY:** *A look at the past to help us to better determine the future.*

**!** **Sebastopol Municipal Library ("Carnegie Grant"):** The library has roots in the first parcel map of Sebastopol drafted in 1871. In Sebastopol there were numerous early social groups and at least one literary club by 1884, but no library or reading room.

A grant of \$7,500 from Carnegie was obtained in 1911, but the town had hoped to receive \$10,000. This was the period of more stringent Carnegie funding and closer attention to simplicity of architectural style. The matter lapsed until 1914. In 1915, a proposed bond issue to finance a more impressive building received a negative response. In 1916 there was controversy about whether to remove an historic oak tree or Lincoln Hall, an early school and then a community center, to make room for the library; the tree was felled. Brainerd Jones scaled down his library plans to fit the \$7,500 budget. The very simple Classical Revival structure was dedicated January 4, 1917 and served until 1976.

**2. Sebastopol Regional Library:** The building which presently houses the Sebastopol Regional library was constructed in 1975, shortly after the establishment of the Sonoma County Library.<sup>26</sup>

In 2011, the library went through a refresh-remodel, improving the shelving systems, adding more computers for public use, and incorporating the library concept of single-point-of-public-service, among other improvements.

In 2014 a revised JPA expanded the SCL commission and enabled city governments to appoint commissioners along with the county. In 2016, the voters approved Measure Y, a county-wide 1/8th of a cent sales tax that provides funds to expand hours, hire additional staff, and increase access to services and collections, both in person and virtual.<sup>27</sup>

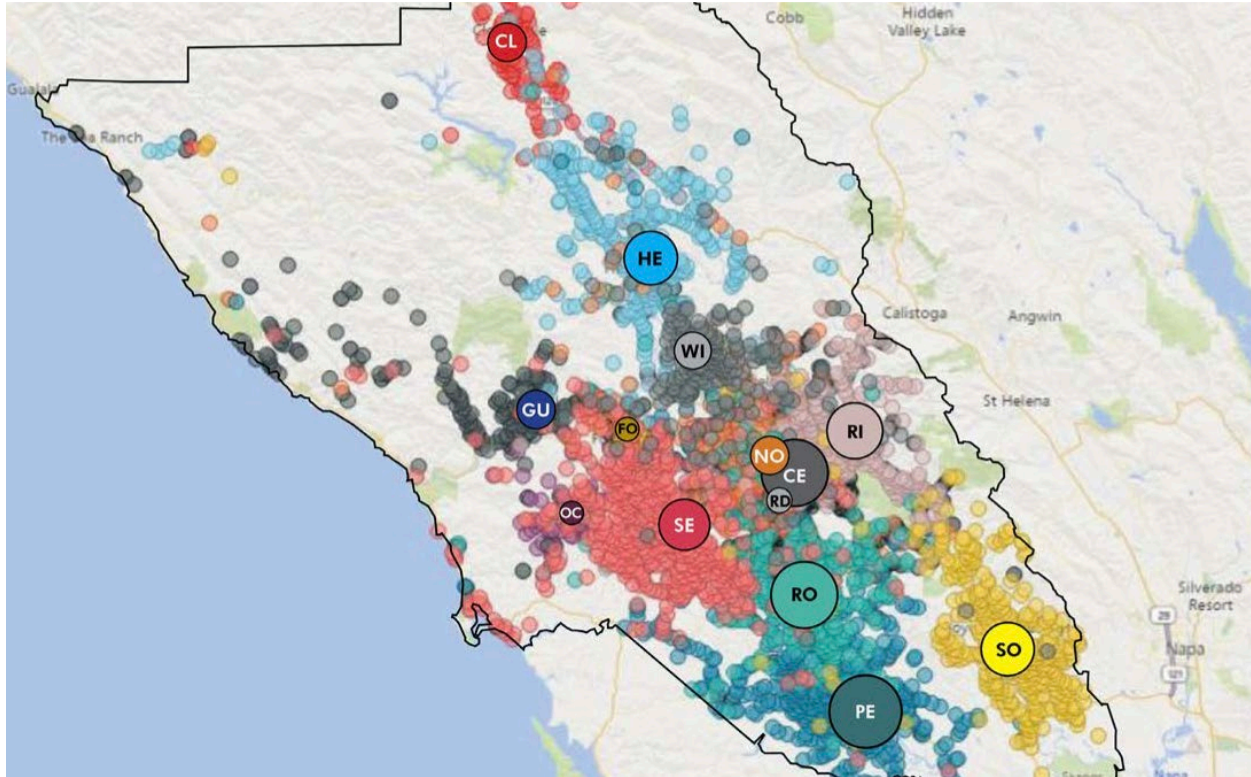
**3. Service Area:** Although the SCL's Facilities Master Plan lists the Sebastopol Library's service area as limited to the 10,000 residents of the City of Sebastopol, the library's "sphere of influence"<sup>28</sup> historically includes residents of the surrounding west county.

In 1973, prior to the creation of the SCL, the Sonoma County Administrator's Office identified the area served by the library as follows: *The western portion of the county between the Russian River and the Petaluma Trading Area.*<sup>29</sup> (Emphasis added)

In 2019, the library received nearly as many visitors as the Rohnert Park-Cotati Regional Library – despite being less than half its size. It was the third highest circulating branch in Sonoma County that year, just behind Central Santa Rosa and Petaluma. It also offered more programs than any other SCL branch and attracted the second-highest number of teen program attendees.

More recently, the SCL's Annual Report for 2022-2023 shows the library as third, following Petaluma (2) and Santa Rosa (1) in average Sunday Visits to the Branch and average Sunday circulation.<sup>30</sup>

An *Orange Boy Data Report* from 2021<sup>31</sup> shows how SCL's facilities provide access to library service at the network level.



**C. INADEQUATE BUILDING = RESTRICTS SERVICE POTENTIAL:** In 2017<sup>32</sup> and 2022<sup>33</sup> the SCL commissioned two independently conducted Facilities Master Plans. The Facilities Master Plans both described aging buildings where maintenance had been deferred from lack of funds and constraints from the pandemic. To fully modernize the library system, the total cost could exceed \$200 million over 25 years. SCL is not solely responsible for these expenses; they are shared by local municipalities and the Library, supported by fundraising by the Sonoma County Public Library Foundation.

The *2017 Facilities Master Plan*<sup>34</sup> included a comprehensive library system assessment which reviewed (1) Who is Sebastopol Library Serving? (2) *How is library space programmed?* and, (3) *How is library space being used?*<sup>35</sup> The findings,

Sebastopol has a slightly above average rate of library visits relative to its population.

Sebastopol *has very little space for the number of borrowers* it has. It also has a below average number of items held for the number for library visits (patrons) it has. (Emphasis added)

The *2023 Facilities Master Plan* Pages 52-53<sup>36</sup> found that,

Given the *inadequacies of the existing building*, it is strongly recommended that it be replaced with a larger branch of at least 20,000 square feet. ...(Emphasis added)

Both reports determined that the library's facility is too small for the number of patrons it serves.

In fact, the 2023 Master Plan concluded:

*A new Sebastopol Library building will be the perfect model for a flexible, resilient, and modernized library system, able to serve the community for generations. (Emphasis added)*

In the letter of April 3, 2023 Library Director, Erika Thibault, states:

*The Sebastopol Branch is known for its innovation and dedication to service, as the foot traffic in the branch demonstrates. It's also a small and inadequate space for what your community needs and expects from a regional library. (Emphasis added)*

This assessment of the functionality of the present library building as too small will not improve merely with the passage of time.

**D. Imagine the Possibilities:**<sup>37</sup> Of significance, a new library/community building, would make it possible to revert the present facility to City use, meeting the City's need for more space to consolidate City Staff.

Over the last 10 years we have seen an increase in partnerships between libraries and other organizations that serve communities. Prior to the pandemic, we saw many libraries partnering with housing projects, recreation centers, or office buildings. Recently, we are seeing new partnerships with healthcare services, workforce development centers, licensing centers. Some libraries have been collaborating with community gardens, which supports educational programs around healthy eating and healthy lifestyles.

Libraries are so much more than the book. Each community provides services around what specifically is best for them today, and the buildings need to be flexible to accommodate new programs in the future. We often create facility master plans with library systems, looking at how to deliver library services on a system-wide basis and how to define each library as a destination unique to each neighborhood and location. It doesn't have to be a one-size-fits-all solution. No two libraries are the same because no two communities are the same.

The traditional impression of libraries as places for quiet reading, research and borrowing books—and of librarians as schoolmarmish shushes—is outdated,<sup>38</sup> as they have changed into bustling civic centers that also provide places for quiet reading and research. In short, they are valuable community centers.

Libraries have developed into top contributors to economic and community health and wellbeing. Today's modern libraries are hubs of community growth, connecting to broad civic agendas and boosting local economies by developing small business and

the workforce. Innovative library services yield huge returns on investment, presenting leaders with a tremendous opportunity to grow their economies.

We have the opportunity, working with our partners, to design a modern, larger, more innovative and efficient building to meet the needs of our community and houses the library services.

Let's be aspirational and look at some examples of the potential the new , larger library building, with services provided by the SCL, can add to our community. Much of what is listed here can be improved, expanded upon, or refined in the 2nd Phase ("Feasibility") of this process with the cooperation and support of our community and partners.

What can the library offer the community with a *larger facility and more staff*? Let's look at a few of the possibilities: 39

We can do such much more....

**1. Life-Long Learning:**<sup>40</sup> An important topic is the education of America's children. libraries serve as cornerstones for accessing information and technology, developing digital literacy skills, and providing numerous support services to students, families, and communities. For generations, public libraries have offered critical services to address the needs of all learners,<sup>41</sup> Public libraries play a huge role in the successful development of community members from early childhood readers<sup>42</sup> to lifelong learners.

A larger building would allow space for more accessible bookshelves, a significant increase in the library's collection, and room for services to serve the needs of our challenged or disabled patrons.

The opportunity for children and families to spend quality time together in a safe and welcoming place is a top priority. More space will add improved opportunity to work with more children and special needs adults and children.<sup>43</sup>

**2. Older Patrons:**<sup>44</sup> The library can be designed to provide a vibrant, dynamic space capable of supporting seniors in their quest for lifelong learning, social engagement, and a sense of belonging. Working with our partner the Sebastopol Senior Center the new library can serve homebound older adults, including material delivery services, health and well-being information and other services such as Host classes on internet resources; sponsor an intergenerational photo contest; start an oral history project; have musical programs; offer the library as a place for support groups to meet; sponsor a home safety program; provide programs on Social Security, Medicare, taxes; and , offer medical programming done by medical professionals

**3. Youth Services:**<sup>45</sup> Service to youth has been a mainstay of the history of public libraries in the United States. The present library building has limited space for the development of the full range of youth services which a library could provide the community. A new building can change through more dedicated space for youth

programs and activities, such as maker space and media labs, without disturbing other patrons.

**4. A Place of Community Gathering:**<sup>46</sup> The notion of libraries as community living rooms signifies a departure from the function and atmosphere of libraries of the past. As well as continuing to serve their traditional roles, libraries can act as an extension of people's recreational time. As library spaces become more flexible and adaptable the number and type of uses, they offer expands, attracting a greater diversity that may include space for food services, cooking classes, and roof top community gardens, to name a few.

Whether discussing concerts, classes, and other events, book clubs and other social groups, or simply a forum where people could come and sit, talk, and read, quite a few people expressed their appreciation that libraries provide many communities with gathering places.<sup>47</sup>

**5. Green Building and Landscape Design:**<sup>48</sup> Under the US Green Building Council's LEED performance system, a green building is one that is built incorporating the following design elements: sustainable site selection and development; water conservation; energy efficiency; local resources, material conservation and waste reduction; indoor environmental quality; and, innovation in design

Green buildings help reduce negative impacts on the natural environment by using less water, energy, and other natural resources; employing renewable energy sources and eco-friendly materials; and reducing emissions and other waste.

In the design and construction of the new library building the goal should be a green and sustainable library considering environmental, economic and social sustainability and working within the guidelines established by the Sustainable Libraries Initiative.<sup>49</sup>

**6. Collections to Celebrate Our Diversity and Local History:**<sup>50</sup> Libraries can represent and recognize a community's history serving as centers to catalog and highlight local historical events and people.

Libraries, archives and museums are natural partners for collaboration in that they serve the same communities in similar ways. Libraries, archives and museums support and enhance lifelong learning opportunities, preserve community heritage, and protect and provide access to historical information.<sup>51</sup> Partnerships of various kinds can help all three institutions fulfil these goals and serve the community to the best of their collective abilities.

Working with potential community partner and neighbor, the West County Museum,<sup>52</sup> our combined resources would increase collections of local history, provide school curriculum support, and offer information and works by and about Asian, Black, Latinx, Indigenous, immigrants and new citizens who are unique and relevant to the West County.

The new library building will also have the ability to host community activities sponsored by potential partnerships with the Sebastopol World Friends,<sup>53</sup> the Enmanji



Buddhist Temple,<sup>54</sup> the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria,<sup>55</sup> and Centro Laboral de Graton (CLG).<sup>56</sup>

**7. Health and Community Well-Being:**<sup>57</sup> An expanded library and staff can more effectively promote social support in our community by linking patrons to federal, state, and local government assistance; including social services, welfare and public assistance, health, education, and employment resources.<sup>58</sup>

Libraries are also increasingly working to educate library staff and the public about ways to support people with mental health and substance use conditions;<sup>59</sup> for an example see the program developed by the San Diego Public Library, in partnership with the San Diego County Health & Human Services Agency, which provides This innovative partnership provides an opportunity for outreach to library patrons, 18 years of age and older, who may be interested in receiving information about mental health, housing and other social services.<sup>60</sup>

In the *Forward Support Sebastopol Survey Results Report (July 2023)* it was found that:

Looking again at the priorities of city budgeting regarding prevention services, would you agree or disagree that a high priority should be put into preventive services operated through the Sebastopol Library for people experiencing and at risk of mental and behavioral health challenges? *Definitely Agree: 42%; Somewhat Agree: 22%; Somewhat Disagree: 09%; Definitely Disagree: 10%; and, Neutral: 19%.*

According to a 2013 national survey by the Pew Research Center's *Internet & American Life Project* <sup>61</sup> one in three American adults have gone online to figure out a medical condition. Libraries have become another source of health information to their patrons.<sup>62</sup> While the pairing of libraries and telehealth may seem an unusual one at first glance, these two industries are natural partners. For one, libraries are purpose-built to meet the informational needs of their communities. This is accomplished by providing both direct access and referrals to accurate information in its many forms.<sup>63</sup> Libraries already provide many vital community services, but they also have a growing opportunity to help bridge gaps in unmet healthcare needs in our community.<sup>64</sup> Working with community partners in the health care industry the library can also inspire innovation and experimentation w telehealth services.<sup>65</sup>

**8. Fostering a More Resilient Community:**<sup>66 67</sup> The impact of climate change poses one of the most significant challenges of our time. As a respected community and resource centers, the library is well positioned to mobilize citizens to learn about climate change and act; to do so requires a collective effort.

A new location for the library, with its larger space and increased resources, can foster essential community engagement.

**9. Crisis and Emergency:**<sup>68</sup> Libraries are safe places welcoming to all in the community with locations in metropolitan and regional areas. Libraries are often the first responders to community needs and are well positioned to provide support during times of emergency.<sup>69</sup>

Library patrons tend to see the library as a clearing house of many services. During times of emergency or natural disaster many assume that they will receive the needed help at the public library which represents a safe place for most people; buildings are well-constructed, and their locations are easily found or known to most of the community. Couple this with fast internet access and the library is the place many residents turn to during a local emergency. Customers use the public library and its librarians as their own personal command center to survive on a normal day, so adapting library services to meet the needs of customers seeking help after an emergency or natural disaster is an added benefit.

Our new library building can be designed with flexibility and space to make this type of adaption and use easier. In times of emergency the new library building can act as a safe haven, serve as an information hub, an evacuee resource and more.

**10. Technology and Access to Broadband:**<sup>70</sup> What has primarily been utilized as a space for collecting books in the past has grown into an area that provides flexible learning. Many people rely on libraries for their computer and internet use. According to a 2015 Pew Research Center report, more than a quarter of Americans who had visited a public library in the past year had used a computer, the internet, or a Wi-Fi connection there, with the usage numbers higher among minorities and low-income groups.

The Sebastopol library offers a Chrome Book lending program and access to the internet through a WIFI hotspot lending program—one of our most robust and popular collections. The demand for these services is high yet available space and a dated facility limit the library's ability to meet the demand.

The library can be designed for a significant increase of space and upgrades to more current technology to make possible a computer lab, which can serve as a center of collaboration, creativity, coworking,<sup>71</sup> and learning, as well as a technology-enabled makerspace for innovation and workforce development activities; a sound studio for multimedia projects; and digital camera-lending programs.

Our library has long aided communities in the struggle for digital equity, providing the public with internet access via library-owned computers, public wi-fi, and device lending, including mobile hotspots.

The library has a fervent commitment to create opportunities, and a formidable barrier to those opportunities can be access to the internet, the availability of the tools needed to gain that access, and fluency in how to use technology.

**11. Business Development:**<sup>72</sup> Local economic development practice has broadened to include strategies for building human, social, institutional and physical resources. This change has created an opportunity for public libraries to identify when and where their assets contribute to building a stronger local economy

According to the Small Business Administration, U.S. small businesses generate the most jobs, creating 1.5 million jobs annually and accounting for 64% of new jobs. Access to information about business planning, financing, market research and

operations make modern libraries ideal for aspiring entrepreneurs who are looking for spaces to research, network, use technology and conduct meetings.

The new Sebastopol library, working with potential community partner, the Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce, can host programs to connect library staff and the community to a robust network of resources, skilled consultants, coaches, and agencies, in order to create a navigator-style portfolio of resources. There will be pathways to enter the workforce, to build on dreams of a career, even to launch small business enterprises. The library can partner with existing county and state agencies to provide immigration services, including citizenship classes.

Another program, which may be possible with a larger library, is a partnership with organizations such as Candid,<sup>73</sup> Candid's resources provide support to the community by giving the public free access to: *GuideStar* is a comprehensive nonprofit research tool; *Foundation Directory* helps nonprofits and individuals find funding faster and other fundraising learning resources developed by Candid's expert trainers.

**12. Strategies for Building Workforce Participation:**<sup>74</sup> Strategic workforce development planning and services are key components of many local economic development strategies. Libraries are uniquely positioned to build the employment information and technology skills of area residents.

Job skill requirements are changing fast and upskilling the workforce is crucial. As nontraditional employment and technology and automation jobs require new skills libraries are playing an integral role. Technology in libraries can be transformational, providing access to expensive tools, training and skills that wouldn't otherwise be available.<sup>75</sup>

The increase in space will allow improved collaborations with the programs and services of Sonoma County Job Link<sup>76</sup> and California's Employment Development Department<sup>77</sup> among others.

**13. Small Business Support Through Public Libraries:**<sup>78</sup> Small businesses are strong contributors to local economies. Public libraries provide support services and online resources necessary to succeed in an increasingly competitive small business sector.

A priority that has emerged loud and clear in our community outreach is the need for comprehensive resources in business, community-based organizations, workforce development (including immigration, citizenship....) and training in conducting research, ESL classes, and other services for immigrants and new citizens.

**14. A Place to Receive Service:**<sup>79</sup> Our current library building is limited in the services it can provide the community as a result of a space which is too small.

In libraries, across the nation, people practice yoga and tai chi, sip lattes in coffee shops and use library provided space and laptops to arrange their virtual start-up offices at long reading-room tables.<sup>80</sup>

If these seem like deviations from libraries' historical role as lenders of books,<sup>81</sup> consider that, around the start of the 20th century, the earliest Carnegie libraries included bowling alleys, music halls, billiard tables, swimming pools and gymnasiums.<sup>82</sup>

**D. POTENTIAL FUNDING OPTIONS:** There are the construction costs to build the library itself. Then, once the basic structure of the building is complete, the next step is to bring the inside of the library alive with the collection, furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E) that will best serve the community.

The estimated construction cost in 2023 was \$1,000 per square foot for construction; plus, the consultants and designers, fees, and permits; and the FF&E.<sup>83</sup>

A potential range of financing options for funding the new building include, but are not limited to, the following:

**1. Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD):** Tax increment financing (TIF) works by freezing the property tax revenues that flow from a designated project area to the city, county, and other taxing entities at the "base level" in the current year. Additional tax revenue in future years (the "increment") is diverted into a separate pool of money, which can be used either to pay for improvements directly or to pay back bonds issued against the anticipated TIF revenue.

**2. Sonoma County Library "Measure Y" Sales Tax:**<sup>84</sup> In November 2016, 72 percent of Sonoma County voters approved Measure Y, a one-eighth of a cent sales tax to support the 14-branch Sonoma County Library system. The funds are being used to: Increase; hours; Increase access; Expand collections; Expand programs and services; and Maintain library facilities.

**3. Development Contributions and Planning Agreements:**<sup>85</sup> Local government areas experiencing significant population change as a result of new development can negotiate contributions from developers towards the cost of providing community facilities, such as libraries.

**4. Government Debt Issuance and Public Fund Investments:**<sup>86</sup> Public agencies have a number of options when financing capital improvements and managing their cash flow, including relying on existing resources or operational surpluses. In some cases, and under certain conditions, debt financing is both the most economical and sensible means of financing both short-term and long-term purposes.

**5. Co-located Libraries:**<sup>87</sup> Sharing the cost between a range of community services can assist in the funding of library projects. Some possibilities include classroom and training facilities for programs providing services to our older citizens, crisis response and community resilience, and social services, city council meetings, and .....

**6. Joint Use libraries:**<sup>88</sup> This approach involves the development of a shared public library service between two or more distinct service providers, with funding provided by local government in addition to the joint service provider. Funding is being sourced

from different authorities, and the development of detailed agreements on the joint use library service must be undertaken. *(Also see the examples in #5, above)*

**7. Commercial Development Opportunities:** Local government has the capacity to utilize its resources for community benefit. This may involve using existing resources more effectively or in a more commercial manner to achieve financial returns. When considering any of these approaches it is important to have specialist cost and financial planning advice and/or develop a business plan, and more.

**8. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** PPPs are collaborations between the City and a private enterprise that can be used to finance, build, and operate projects.

**9. State and Federal Government Grants:** Through agencies such as such as Institute of Museum and Library Services,<sup>89</sup> FEMA,<sup>90</sup> and The California State Library<sup>91</sup> and the like. Provide some assistance in grant identification, application support, and training. State and federal grants provide support for a particular purpose including smart city projects, research, or strategic development.

**10. Philanthropic Foundation Grants:** Certain non-profit organizations and foundations provide grant funding to support Smart City initiatives including New America, the Kaiser Foundation, the Kaufman Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Knight Foundation, Arnold Foundation, and others.

**11. Johnston Endowment:** As appropriate, use of the Johnston Endowment in support of the new library facility.

A coordinated fundraising campaign can benefit the entire community.

### **III. CONCLUSION**

We are inspired by the opportunity to promote a healthy and sustainable economy within our community. We also look forward to working to achieve our goal in cooperation with the Sonoma County Library and the County of Sonoma

A new civic building, capable of housing the library and related community services provides an exciting opportunity to attract, retain, and support the health of our community as well as supporting the growth of local economy.

The second phase of this planning process, devoted to the feasibility of this undertaking, is one of the goals that a continuation of this committee would work to achieve.

Identifying and initiating one, if not all, of the options listed above would the work of the committee. We look forward to continuation of our work into the next phase and are eager to receive your comments and questions.

**EXHIBIT A**

**FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The committee has considered future possibilities for a new civic building which could provide 20,000-30,000 sq. ft. of space for the relocation of the Sebastopol's library, including but not limited, to the issues of increased staffing and adequate facilities as well as provide vital meeting and work spaces for the use of the library's patrons and community based organizations.

We conclude that, under the present circumstances, SCL is unable to increase staffing unless we also increase the size of the space presently utilized for library programs and services from 10,000 square feet to 20,000 to 30,000 square feet. This increase will provide space for future growth as well as space for important civic services such as meeting rooms and potential compatible commercial operations.

**FINDINGS**

1. We should prepare for a building and development project which may take 7-10 years to complete.
2. Financial plans for the project should consider numerous sources and the collaboration and support of our community and partners.
3. When considering the new building's funding we should seek the support of our partners the County of Sonoma and the Sonoma County Library.
3. There is a well-documented and long-standing need for a new civic building capable of providing at least 20,000-30,000 sq. feet of space to relocate the Sebastopol Regional Library. The residents of the library's service area are missing out on programs and services simply because the library is too small and, consequently, staff size is limited.
4. The area served by the library has traditionally included a significant portion of West Sonoma County from outside the city limits of Sebastopol.
5. There is a demonstrated need for spaces in our community for work, creation, learning, play and socializing and meetings.

Thriving in the network economy requires the ability to collaborate, communicate, work in groups, solve problems creatively and think critically. The expanded library can provide not only the space, but also the

research assistance and resources for a wide variety of customers to thrive, including community based co-working groups, nongovernmental organizations and for-profit and nonprofit businesses.

The space needs for play (such as developing a Claymation) are quite different than those needed for education (such as meeting with research colleagues) and civic engagement.<sup>92</sup>

6. Relocation to the new civic building could provide space for the consolidation of Sebastopol city services and administration in the space vacated by the library.
7. We have determined that it would be in the best interests of our community to continue the planning process for a new community building with the capacity to house the Sebastopol Regional Library beyond this phase and into a 2nd Phase ("Feasibility").

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

We recommend that the City Council provide authorization to this committee to continue and to begin work on a second phase that explores the feasibility of the planning process.

We also recommend the continued use of a "participatory design process." As noted, in the Summary, such an approach will provide our community the opportunity to play an active role in the design and construction of the new civic structure which will house the Sebastopol library.

The committee suggests that at the direction of the City Council the feasibility phase span 12 months and accomplish a project framework for the construction of a new civic building that provides at least 20,000 sq. ft. for the library.

The City's Community Development Director will serve as an *ex officio* member of the committee. In the conduct of its work, the committee will work closely with the Community Development Director in support of the goal of developing economic development strategies, options, and recommendation to planning issues.

During the feasibility phase, the Director of the SCL, or her designee, will be invited to serve as an active member of the Ad Hoc Library Committee<sup>93</sup> adding the experience and resources of that organization to our effort to design a new, building to locate the Sebastopol library's services.

During the feasibility phase the committee will, upon funding approval by the City Council, complete the following tasks:

**Develop a Schedule for the Feasibility Phase:** Collaborative planning may also result in links to other plans developed by agencies such as the local economic development board, Sonoma State University, Santa Rosa Junior College, City of Santa Rosa, tourism development committees and relevant city and county government departments. A collaborative plan should include: (a) Identification of the

various stakeholders; (b) Type of information to be gathered and/or issues to be addressed; (c) Consultation approaches to be used for gathering this information; and, (d) Integration of this information into a Library Development Plan.

It is how these plans are developed and linked that is important in ensuring the right outcomes for the public library service and its community.

**Transition:** We acknowledge that the size of the space presently utilized for library programs and services restricts the ability to provide our community with the benefits of a 21st Century Library is increased from 10,000 square feet to 20,000 to 30,000 square feet. This increase will provide space for future growth as well as space for important civic services such as meeting rooms and potential compatible commercial operations.

The committee also finds that there is an immediate and pressing demand for a temporary/transitional workspace and room for an increase of services, for the library and community based organizations, pending the construction of a new facility as well as continuing discussion on the Community Hub.

Therefore, we recommend that the committee, working with the City's Community Development Director, the Sonoma County Library, and our partners develop and implement a plan for the increase of space and services for the review and approval of the Council within six months. Such planning should include the feasibility of temporary facilities and or joint/shared by the library and our community based organizations and the Community Hub concept.

**Conduct A Community Needs Assessment:** A needs assessment is used to determine why the community wants or needs a new or changed library service. Needs assessment is used extensively as a planning tool, particularly for community services and social planning. It has a strong basis in community consultation, socio-demographic indicators and comparison to other communities/service models.

The assessment process should include, but not be limited to, community forums, focus groups, and surveys.

**Develop A Plan for Financing the Project:** A financial feasibility study (sometimes called a feasibility analysis or feasibility report) is a way to evaluate whether or not a project plan could be successful. A feasibility study evaluates the practicality of the building plan in order to judge whether to move forward with the project, or not.

It does so by answering two questions: (1) Do our partners have the required tools or resources to complete this project? and, (2) Will there be a high enough return on investment to make the project worth pursuing?

Feasibility studies are important for projects that represent significant investments. Projects that also have a large potential impact on operation may also require a feasibility study.

**Commission the Preparation of a Feasibility Brief:**<sup>94</sup> This brief will provide the Council a statement of requirements for a new Civic Building capable of providing at



least 20,000 sq. feet for lease to the Sonoma County Library-Sebastopol Regional Library Branch. It will provide the functional and non-site-specific information the City Council will need, in order to: (1) understand the significance and direction of the new library; (2) determine costings; (3) help expedite library design e.g., the minimum floor areas required for library activities; and (4) detailed funding opportunities and proposed capital campaigns; and (5) reach a decision on moving the project forward to the 3rd Phase: Hiring an Architect

The Committee shall provide quarterly interim reports to the Sebastopol City Council and staff including any reports from:

**A. Working Groups:** When it deems appropriate, the Ad Hoc Library Committee shall prepare, for review and approval, a proposal for the formation of Working Groups. Working Group membership should and will vary over time. What the Working Groups needs at the start of the project is not the same as what it will need in the middle, or at the end. The Committee's proposal should focus on the proposed role of the working group and the issues to be addressed. This will ensure appropriate outcomes for all involved.

**B. Community Hub ("Service Corridor):** As noted above, in the course of our review, the committee identified the great potential for the creation of a civic hub ("service corridor") extending from the Senior Center to Ives Park. The benefits, economic and social, of such a civic hub are reviewed in the articles such *What is a Great Civic Space*<sup>95</sup> and *Civic Institutions as Community Anchors*.<sup>96</sup> We urge partnering with community partners from the government, non-profit and private sectors to help the Sebastopol create such a space.

### **CITATIONS**

**Note:** *In the interests of time, the Committee has prepared and provided detailed citations and footnotes for those of you interested in taking a "deeper dive" into some of the topics reviewed in this report. We urge you to take advantage of them.*

<sup>1</sup> *A classic Catch 22. See, CATCH-22 definition in American English - Collins Dictionary*  
<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/catch-22#:~:text=If%20you%20describe%20a%20situation,a%20Catch%2D22%20situation%20here.>

<sup>2</sup> CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM REPORT Agenda Item Number: 7 (06-20-2023) <https://www.cityofsebastopol.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Agenda-Item-Number-7-City-Response-Letter-to-Regional-Library.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://csreports.aspeninstitute.org/documents/Aspen-LibrariesReport-2017-FINAL.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> *The Value of California's Public Libraries | Full Report and Value Propositions*  
<https://www.library.ca.gov/services/to-libraries/value-of-libraries/infosheets/>

<sup>5</sup> *The Economic Impact of the Sonoma County Library Summary Report (April 2024)*

<https://sonomalibrary.civicweb.net/document/70802/Economic%20Impact%20Study.pdf?handle=75F019D1E3804C3684B94352F2F407AC>

<sup>6</sup> See, *How Library Visits Create Daytime Foot Traffic and Promote Economic Vitality in Downtowns: A Case Study* <https://www.urbanlibraries.org/files/MLK-Case-Study.pdf> Also see: *Libraries Build Business: Initiative Highlights* [https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org/advocacy/files/content/Workforce/LBB%20Initiative%20Highlights%20Report%20-%200072322\\_final.pdf](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org/advocacy/files/content/Workforce/LBB%20Initiative%20Highlights%20Report%20-%200072322_final.pdf) and *Supporting Financial Wellbeing: How Libraries Can Increase Community Economic Vitality* <https://programminglibrarian.org/articles/supporting-financial-wellbeing-how-libraries-can-increase-community-economic-vitality> and *The role libraries play in economic development* <https://blog.pressreader.com/libraries-institutions/role-libraries-play-in-economic-development>

<sup>7</sup> See, *Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development*, <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/46006/1001075-Making-Cities-Stronger.PDF>

<sup>8</sup> See, *ALA-Articles and Studies Related to Library Value (Return on Investment)* <https://www.ala.org/ala/ors/reports/roi.htm> and *Library Statistics* <https://slol.libguides.com/LibraryStatistics/PublicLibraryROI>

<sup>9</sup> *The Hidden Value in Libraries*, <https://medium.com/the-information/the-hidden-value-in-libraries-bf1b814f7f20> and *How Americans Value Public Libraries in Their Communities (Pew)* <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2013/12/11/how-americans-value-public-libraries-in-their-communities-2/>

<sup>10</sup> See, *Libraries and Power of Space* <https://librarylandproject.org/stories-blog/2023/2/27/libraries-and-the-power-of-place>

<sup>11</sup> See, *Connecting Communities: Libraries as Invisible Infrastructure* (National League of Cities) <https://www.nlc.org/article/2022/05/23/connecting-communities-libraries-as-invisible-infrastructure/>

<sup>13</sup> See, *Library as Infrastructure* <https://placesjournal.org/article/library-as-infrastructure/?cn-reloaded=1> and *Can Libraries Save America?* <https://www.carnegie.org/news/articles/can-libraries-save-america/#:~:text=In%20The%20Gospel%20of%20Wealth,best%20way%20to%20spend%20money.>

<sup>15</sup> See, *The Complicated Role of the Modern Public Library*(National Endowment for the Humanities) <https://www.neh.gov/article/complicated-role-modern-public-library>

<sup>16</sup> See, *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life (Hardcover)* <https://www.amazon.com/Palaces-People-Infrastructure-Inequality-Polarization/dp/1524761168#:~:text=In%20Palaces%20for%20the%20People,where%20crucial%20connections%20are%20formed.>

<sup>17</sup> See, *Understanding the Social Wellbeing Impacts of the Nation's Libraries and Museums*

<https://www.ims.gov/sites/default/files/2021-10/swi-report.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> *Connecting Communities: Libraries as Invisible Infrastructure*

<https://www.nlc.org/article/2022/05/23/connecting-communities-libraries-as-invisible-infrastructure/#:~:text=This%20invisible%20infrastructure%20supports%20a,civic%20life%20and%20civic%20spirit.>

<sup>19</sup> *Types of Public Libraries*, <https://ischool.sjsu.edu/post/types-public-libraries>

<sup>20</sup> *Can Libraries Save America?* <https://www.carnegie.org/news/articles/can-libraries-save-america/#:~:text=In%20The%20Gospel%20of%20Wealth,best%20way%20to%20spend%20money.>

<sup>21</sup> *Public Libraries: Our Last Stand for Social Infrastructure*

<https://fortelabs.com/blog/public-libraries-our-last-stand-for-social-infrastructure/>

<sup>22</sup> For a comprehensive review of the value of rural-urban partnerships see, *Rural-Urban Partnerships An Integrated Approach to Economic Development* [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/urban-rural-and-regional-development/rural-urban-partnerships\\_9789264204812-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/urban-rural-and-regional-development/rural-urban-partnerships_9789264204812-en) and *Why rural America needs cities*

<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/why-rural-america-needs-cities/> and *Video: Spotlight on Rural California* [https://www.ppic.org/blog/video-spotlight-on-rural-california/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=video-spotlight-on-rural-california?utm\\_source=ppic&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=blog\\_subscriber](https://www.ppic.org/blog/video-spotlight-on-rural-california/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=video-spotlight-on-rural-california?utm_source=ppic&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=blog_subscriber)

<sup>23</sup> *Community Centered: 23 Reasons Why Your Library Is the Most Important Place in Town*

<https://publiclibrariesonline.org/2013/04/community-centered-23-reasons-why-your-library-is-the-most-important-place-in-town/>

<sup>24</sup> For examples see: *The Role of Public Libraries community Partnerships in Promoting Digital Adoption* <https://www.fcc.gov/sites/default/files/acdde-digital-empowerment-wg-digital-inclusion-report-06242021.pdf> and *Telehealth Is Improving Health Care in Rural Areas*

<https://hbr.org/2019/05/telehealth-is-improving-health-care-in-rural-areas>

<sup>25</sup> See, *Rural California (Public Policy Institute of California)*

<https://www.ppic.org/publication/rural-california/>

and, in addition to the proposals of the PPIC, see the policy papers developed by Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) <https://www.rcrcnet.org/about-rcrc>

<sup>26</sup> *Joint Powers Agreement For Consolidation Of Public Library Facilities Among Cities In The County of Sonoma And The Provision County-Wide Library Services by the Sonoma County Library* (1975)

<https://www.sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/about/JPAprior.pdf>

and *First Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement for the County-Wide Provision of Library Services by the Sonoma County Library* (2014)

<https://www.sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/about/JPA2014.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> *Measure Y Voter Investment in Libraries*

<https://www.sonomalibrary.org/governance/measurey>

<sup>28</sup> *Sphere of influence*: The area that people travel from to use a service. Intra-urban: Urban means a settlement of over 10,000 people, intra means within. Therefore, intra-urban means within an urban area. Rural-urban fringe: The boundary between the urban area and the rural area <https://www.jkgeography.com/spheres-of-influence.html#:~:text=Sphere%20of%20influence%3A%20The%20area,area%20and%20the%20rural%20area>.

<sup>29</sup> For demographic of the Sebastopol Library's Service Area see *US Postal Service ZIP Code Maps for 95419 95472, 94923,94922, 95465, 964444, and 95419*. <https://www.zipdatamaps.com> Also see, *A Portrait of California-Sonoma County* <https://s3.amazonaws.com/moa/APortraitofSonoma2021Update.pdf> 20

<sup>30</sup><https://sonomalibrary.civicweb.net/document/70228/Annual%20Report%202022-2023.pdf?handle=ED36422237294330934D07B2695F84F3> at Page 9

<sup>31</sup> [https://sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/facilities/Facilities-Master-Plan-Final-Report\\_8.18.22.pdf](https://sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/facilities/Facilities-Master-Plan-Final-Report_8.18.22.pdf) at Page 14.

<sup>32</sup><https://sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/facilities/FacilitiesMasterPlan.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> [https://sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/facilities/Facilities-Master-Plan-Final-Report\\_8.18.22.pdf](https://sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/facilities/Facilities-Master-Plan-Final-Report_8.18.22.pdf) Pages 52-53

<sup>34</sup><https://sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/facilities/FacilitiesMasterPlan.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> *Library System Assessment*  
[https://www.sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/facilities/170103\\_Library-System-Assessment-FINAL.pdf](https://www.sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/facilities/170103_Library-System-Assessment-FINAL.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> <sup>36</sup> *Sonoma County Library Facilities Master Plan (2023)*  
<https://www.sonomalibrary.org/sites/default/files/attachments/facilities/SCL-FMP-Final-Report-Consolidated-2023-11-05.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> *People Places: A Guide for Planning Public Library Buildings*  
[https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/people\\_places.pdf](https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/people_places.pdf) and *Whole Building Design Guide (National Institute of Building Sciences)*  
<https://www.wbdg.org/building-types/libraries/public-library> which provides a "step-by-step" guides to the development and construction of new library buildings.

<sup>38</sup> For example, see, *The Soundscape of Twenty-First Century Libraries*, <https://acousticstoday.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/The-Soundscape-of-Twenty-First-Century-Libraries-Gary-W.-Siebein-Keely-M.-Siebein-Marylin-Roa-and-Hyun-G.-Paek.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> See, *Co-creating library services through human-centered design*  
[https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/co-creating-library-services-human-centered-design.html?utm\\_source=SFMC&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=April+17+2024+Crossroads&utm\\_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm\\_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads](https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/co-creating-library-services-human-centered-design.html?utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_content=April+17+2024+Crossroads&utm_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads)

<sup>40</sup> *Public libraries continue to adapt, enriching communities across America*  
<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/public-libraries-continue-to-adapt-enriching-communities-across-america/>

<sup>41</sup> *Equal Access: Universal Design of Libraries* <https://www.washington.edu/doit/equal-access-universal-design-libraries> and *Access to libraries for persons with disabilities - CHECKLIST*  
<https://archive.ifla.org/VII/s9/nd1/iflapr-89e.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> For example: *Serving the Underserved: Children with Disabilities at Your Library*  
[https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/serving-the-underserved-children.html?utm\\_source=SFMC&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=April+17+2024+Crossroads&utm\\_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm\\_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads](https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/serving-the-underserved-children.html?utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_content=April+17+2024+Crossroads&utm_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads) and *Autism Accessible Browsing: a Community Effort at the Iowa City Public Library*  
[https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/autism-accessible-browsing-icpl.html?utm\\_source=SFMC&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=April+17+2024+Crossroads&utm\\_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm\\_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads](https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/autism-accessible-browsing-icpl.html?utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_content=April+17+2024+Crossroads&utm_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads)

<sup>43</sup> *What does the research say about the relationship between student public library card ownership and student achievement, particularly in literacy? What does the research say about the role of the public library in student achievement?*  
<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/Products/Region/midwest/Ask-A-REL/10270>

<sup>44</sup> *Transforming Life After 50 A Resource for Libraries*  
<https://transforminglifeafter50.org/about/> and *Libraries Respond: Services to Older Adults*  
<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/diversity/librariesrespond/services-older-adults> and *The New Frontier: How Libraries Serve Older Audiences*  
<https://www.engagingolderadults.org/blog/2021/4/22/the-new-frontier-how-libraries-serve-older-audiences>

<sup>45</sup> For examples see, *Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development*  
<https://wallacefoundation.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/Public-Libraries-as-Partners-in-Youth-Development.pdf> and *Services and Resources for Children and Young Adults in Public Libraries* <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/frss/publications/95357/index.asp?sectionid=9> and *Youth Services: Programming Ideas* <https://4cls.libguides.com/c.php?g=1213421&p=9045930>

<sup>46</sup> See, *New Library Design: Spaces That Connect, Cultivate, and Transform Communities*  
<https://www.libraryjournal.com/story/new-library-design-spaces-that-connect-cultivate-and-transform-communities>

<sup>47</sup> *Part 4: What people want from their libraries* (Pew Research)  
<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2013/01/22/part-4-what-people-want-from-their-libraries/>

<sup>48</sup> *What is a Green Library? Implementing Green Practices in Libraries*  
<https://www.lisedunetwork.com/what-is-a-green-library-implementing-green-practices-in-libraries/>

<sup>49</sup> <sup>49</sup> <https://www.sustainablelibrariesinitiative.org> and ALA LibGuides Sustainability and Libraries ALA LibGuides <https://libguides.ala.org/SustainableLibraries> among others.

<sup>50</sup> *Public Libraries, Archives and Museums: Trends in Collaboration and Cooperation*  
<https://archive.ifa.org/VII/s8/pub/Profrep108.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> *Charting the Landscape, Mapping New Paths: Museums, Libraries, and K-12 Learning*  
<https://www.imls.gov/publications/charting-landscape-mapping-new-paths-museums-libraries-and-k-12-learning>

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<sup>52</sup> <https://www.wschs.org/museum/>

<sup>53</sup> <https://sebastopolwf.org>

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.enmanjitemple.com>

<sup>55</sup> Note: The Bodega Miwok (aka, Olamentko) traditionally lived in the area of Bodega Bay. The neighboring Southern Pomo Sebastopol group lived just north and east of the Miwok. The town of Sebastopol is located about one mile midway between the north boundary of Miwok territory and the southern edge of Southern Pomo territory. <https://gratonrancheria.com>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.gratondaylabor.org/about>

<sup>57</sup> *Health & Wellness Quick Reference*, <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/dmhas/skillbuilding/dana/health-and-wellness-full-revised.pdf>

<sup>58</sup> *Public libraries: A community-level resource to advance population health*  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6329675/#:~:text=Public%20libraries%20enhance%20children's%20reading,bond%20with%20their%20young%20children.>

<sup>59</sup> *Libraries as mental health hubs: Across the United States, libraries are striving to offer visitors mental health supports* <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/04/libraries-health-hubs> also see *Providing Mental Health Resources at Your Library* <https://www.nnlm.gov/training/class-catalog/providing-mental-health-resources-your-library>

<sup>60</sup> *Mental Health Services* <https://www.sandiego.gov/public-library/central-library/mental-health-services>

<sup>61</sup> *Health Online 2013* <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2013/01/15/health-online-2013/>

<sup>62</sup> *Public Libraries as Public Health Messengers*  
<https://publiclibrariesonline.org/2024/02/public-libraries-as-public-health-messengers/>

<sup>63</sup> See, *Community of Practice for Telehealth at the Library*  
<https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/community-of-practice-for-telehealth-at-the-library.html> **and** *Bridging the Digital Divide: Telehealth and Libraries Webinar Series*  
<https://www.nnlm.gov/training/class-catalog/bridging-digital-divide-telehealth-and-libraries-webinar-series>

<sup>64</sup> See, *Public libraries: A community-level resource to advance population health*  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6329675/>

<sup>65</sup> *Medical Librarian Licensing and Certification*  
<https://www.healthcarepathway.com/certification/medical-librarian-certification/>

<sup>66</sup> *Resilient Communities: Libraries Respond to Climate Change (A Programming Guide for Libraries)*  
[https://www.ala.org/tools/sites/ala.org.tools/files/content/ResComm\\_ProgGuide%20FINAL100820.pdf](https://www.ala.org/tools/sites/ala.org.tools/files/content/ResComm_ProgGuide%20FINAL100820.pdf)

<sup>67</sup> See, *Resilience vs. Sustainability: The Future of Libraries Creating a hub for resilient and sustainable community culture*  
<https://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2011/resilience-vs-sustainability-the-future-of-libraries/> and *Sustainability in Public Libraries : Creating a hub for resilient and sustainable community culture* <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/sustainability-public-libraries/#:~:text=They%20can%20do%20this%20in,food%20and%20native%20plant%20seeds>

<sup>68</sup> *Libraries as Public Health Partners in Times of Crisis*  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8396689/>

<sup>69</sup> See, a compilation of references *What is essential? Understanding community resilience and public libraries in the United States during disasters*  
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33173814/>

<sup>70</sup> *Libraries Are Key to Providing Broadband Access to California Communities*  
<https://cenic.org/blog/libraries-are-key-to-providing-broadband-access-to-ca-communities>

<sup>71</sup> See, *Coworking*  
[https://www.pcworld.com/article/477223/coworking\\_at\\_the\\_public\\_library.html](https://www.pcworld.com/article/477223/coworking_at_the_public_library.html)

<sup>72</sup> *Public Libraries Role in Workforce and Small Business Development: A look across ten public library systems* <https://www.cosla.org/assets/MTM/Consolidated%20Final%20Report%2010-01-2022.pdf>

<sup>73</sup> *Candid-About Us* <https://candid.org/about> and *Candid-Empower your community with vital resources* <https://candid.org/improve-your-nonprofit/candid-in-your-community>

<sup>74</sup> *Work in Progress: Workforce Development in Public Libraries*  
<https://www.libraryjournal.com/story/Work-in-Progress-Workforce-Development-in-Public-Libraries>

<sup>75</sup> For example, *School Year Teen Internships at SFPL* <https://sfpl.org/teen-internships>

<sup>76</sup> <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/dmhas/skillbuilding/dana/health-and-wellness-full-revised.pdf>

<sup>77</sup> <https://edd.ca.gov>

<sup>78</sup> *Big Ideas for Small Business: How libraries strengthened their small business programs to reach those who needed them most* <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2021/11/01/big-ideas-for-small-business/>

<sup>79</sup> *Connecting Individuals With Social Services: The Library's Role* <https://www.ifla.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/assets/reference-and-information-services/publications/512-hines-en.pdf>

<sup>80</sup> *The New Town Square* <https://oregonbusiness.com/18865-the-new-town-square/> and *Use Library Business Centers* <https://medium.com/everylibrary/use-library-business-centers-294f61145e26> and *Cafés with a Conscience: Libraries partner with social justice groups on meals and missions* <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2021/11/01/cafes-with-a-conscience/> and *Community Gardens and Libraries: A Perfect Pairing* <https://medium.com/everylibrary/community-gardens-and-libraries-a-perfect-pairing-5d672130e67a> and *Petaluma Library Garden* [https://sonomamg.ucanr.edu/About\\_Us/projects/Petaluma\\_Library\\_Garden/](https://sonomamg.ucanr.edu/About_Us/projects/Petaluma_Library_Garden/)

<sup>81</sup> See, *From Book Stacks to Psychosis and Food Stamps, Librarians Confront a New Workplace* <https://californiahealthline.org/news/article/librarians-workplace-changing-social-work/>

<sup>82</sup> Note: The first Carnegie in the United States, the Braddock, which opened in the 1890s, was filled with resources and services far beyond books. It featured a massive swimming pool, an 1100-seat music hall, a gym, a bowling alley, and many other unexpected features. These things were provided for the workers at Carnegie's first steel mill. (The White workers, Black workers had to be satisfied with borrowing books.) The library - and these broad services - recognized the importance of the physical space and potential of the public library, an importance that remains just as true today. *Braddock Carnegie Library* <https://theclio.com/entry/19242>

<sup>83</sup> Note: What is FF&E stand for? FF&E is an acronym for Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment. FF&E is often not supplied by the general contractor, but may be installed by them, denoted as 'OFCI' or 'Owner Furnished, Contractor Installed. Depending on the scale and type of project, FF&E design may begin schematically as early as feasibility studies.

<sup>84</sup> *Measure Y Voter Investment in Libraries* <https://www.sonomalibrary.org/governance/measurey>

<sup>85</sup> *DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT MANUAL: Collaboration in Pursuit of Community Interests* [https://www.ca-ilg.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/resources\\_FinalDevAgreement4-5-02.pdf](https://www.ca-ilg.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/resources_FinalDevAgreement4-5-02.pdf)

<sup>86</sup> *California Debt Financing Guide (Guide)* Addresses the five principal responsibilities of public agencies choosing debt financing: i.1 Understand Your Public Agency; i.2 Decide Whether Debt Financing Is Appropriate For Your Agency; i.3 Apply the Appropriate Analysis to the Decision to Use Debt Financing; i.4 Lead the Process of Issuing Your Debt; i.5 Manage Your Debt After It Is Issued. <https://www.treasurer.ca.gov/cdiac/debtpubs/financing-guide.pdf>



<sup>87</sup> For examples see the discussion at *From Co-location to Blended Facilities*  
<https://www.libraryjournal.com/story/From-Co-location-to-Blended-Facilities>

<sup>88</sup> See, *Joint-Use Libraries: Home* <https://libguides.ala.org/Jointuselibraries>

<sup>89</sup> *Federal Support for Libraries and Museums*, <https://www.imls.gov> and Community Gardens

<sup>90</sup> *FEMA Grants* <https://www.fema.gov/grants> and *Preparedness Grants*  
<https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness> and *Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities* <https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/building-resilient-infrastructure-communities>

<sup>91</sup> *California Grants Portal*, <https://www.grants.ca.gov>

<sup>92</sup> *Collaboration Solutions Idea Gallery* [https://ideas.demco.com/idea/idea\\_collaboration-solutions/?webSyncID=7188154e-ad8c-6226-036e-4cca14dc43e6&sessionGUID=62737dc4-45d6-1739-db89-693b350eb153](https://ideas.demco.com/idea/idea_collaboration-solutions/?webSyncID=7188154e-ad8c-6226-036e-4cca14dc43e6&sessionGUID=62737dc4-45d6-1739-db89-693b350eb153)

<sup>93</sup> See, *First Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement for the County-Wide Provision of Library Services by the Sonoma County Library X. SERVICES, RESOURCES, AND FACILITIES C. and (C) (4)*

<sup>94</sup> For example: *Monterey Public Library Feasibility Study*  
<https://files.monterey.org/MPLibrary/Documents/Get%20Involved/Library%20Facility%20Feasibility%20Study.pdf> and *Libraries Are Crucial Social Infrastructure for the 20-Minute City*  
<https://www.gensler.com/blog/libraries-crucial-social-infrastructure-20-minute-city#:~:text=Our%20cities%20and%20communities%20need,sector%20to%20provide%20these%20resources.>

<sup>95</sup> *What is a Great Civic Space* <https://www.pps.org/article/benefits-public-spaces>

<sup>96</sup> *Civic Institutions as Community Anchors* <https://www.pps.org/article/initiative-civic-centers>

**May 15, 2024**

**Sebastopol City Council**

Diana Rich, Mayor  
Stephen Zollman, Vice Mayor  
Neysa Hinton  
Sandra Maurer  
Jill McLewis

Ref: City of Sebastopol Ad Hoc Library Committee

Libraries are an essential part of a thriving community. A central library can be and should be a hub for exploring and learning. They should also be an open, light and inviting space that encourages use.

As a Senior, and as a longtime resident of this community, I would encourage the exploration of a new Library that would have multiple approaches to learning. Over 30% of the residents of Sebastopol are seniors. What is lacking is a facility that encourages and supports intergenerational collaborative interactions. Imagine a library facility that brings local high school students in contact with Seniors. Seniors that could share life-learning experiences that would give context to the world students will be entering. Or – a library that has open and light glassed rooms that would be appropriate for a Senior to read to children.

I personally support the City of Sebastopol's efforts in exploring the possibility of a new updated community library.

Sincerely

Gary W Bachelor  
Board President  
Sebastopol Area Senior Center  
707 235 3582