

Vaughn Library Renewal FAQ

What will a renovation cost?

Phase One of the renovation is a high impact transformation of the first and second floors, addressing essential systems such as sprinklers, HVAC, electric, plumbing, 2nd floor windows and finishes for \$4.3M in 2025 dollars.

Phase Two of improvements addresses historic preservation and community space on the third floor. Façade reconfigurations— Main St. and Vaughn Ave. entrances and basement improvements are included in this phase. \$5M in 2025-26 dollars.

How will that impact property taxes?

A \$4.3M general obligation 20-year bond would result in an additional \$36 / \$100,000 in property taxes. That is about \$3 a month.

Will there be other ways to raise the funds?

Yes! Phase Two will be funded through state, federal and private foundation grants. A Capital Campaign Committee will work to raise additional funding from corporations and individuals with a goal of \$1.5M. The goal is to raise \$3M through non-tax dollars over the next two years. The Friends of the VPL & the VPL Foundation will contribute to the project.

How many floors will the renovation impact?

Phase One will focus on the first and second floor, resulting in about 11,000 square feet of library user space. To meet all the needs; such as additional meeting room space, a digital work lab and a large (50 seats) community meeting space, we need to renovate another 6,700 square feet on the third floor, which is Phase Two, an important piece of reaching all library spatial needs.

Where will the library be while work is being done?

During Phase One, the library will operate out of the second floor while the first floor is being renewed and then will move to the first floor while the second floor is being renovated. This will obviously challenge everyone, but it will also save dollars.

Why not choose to build a new library?

The Vaughn was built in 1888 and has uniquely served as a library for Ashland since its doors opened. It is located at the heart of downtown, easily accessible by walking, biking or driving. To build a similar building in 2023 dollars would be \$13.8M, so quite a bit more than the cost to renovate our 136 year old library. We just could not get a building like this in today's market.

What about parking?

While there are two public parking lots within one block of the library, we understand street parking is preferred. Re-opening an entrance on Main St. increases the options for drivers, parking on either Main St or Vaughn Ave to access the library.

Will people still need a traditional library in the age of the internet? In 2023, the library meeting rooms were used over 1300 times. That is about 4.5 times a day. About 172 people visit the library each day we are open. 3,514 people learned something new or met a new friend at a library program. Over 4,000 questions were asked of the librarians. It is true, information, books, podcasts and films can be streamed directly to your home or device. Especially because much of human life is now connected to screens, a central place for community interaction is essential to maintaining healthy connections with neighbors and friends. While the renovation floor plans create easier access to the collections, the floor plans give priority to people space within the library.

Will the new space configuration increase operating costs?

The efficiencies built into new systems; plumbing, heating & cooling, windows, lighting will reduce annual operating costs by at least \$7,000/year, saving tax payer dollars and meeting sustainability goals. A centrally located main librarian desk will allow one librarian to see both entrances. Eliminating some of the walls and introducing more interior glass will create bright and more secure places throughout the library, especially on the second floor where librarian workspace will also be located.

Why Now? Investment in analysis, planning and design are current. Building systems are at the end of their lifecycles, financing is available and costs will rise as time passes. Renewal will spark further development of historic downtown Ashland.