



# Pacifica Library Modernization Project FAQs

**With the oldest libraries in San Mateo County, Pacifica seeks to modernize its two branches, Sharp Park and Sanchez, into 21st-century spaces for Pacificans to learn, connect, and grow.**

## What is planned for Pacifica's libraries?

Pacifica is seeking to update and modernize its public libraries, which have served the city well for decades but are glaringly outdated, inefficient, and inaccessible by modern standards. Our plans envision a complete rebuild of Sharp Park Library, creating a new, full-service building, and renovating the Sanchez Library to meet modern standards and provide 24/7 access to many books and materials through a self-service kiosk.

In addition to improving structural issues like accessibility, electrical wiring, and HVAC systems, both branches would finally offer basic amenities every other county library already enjoys, such as an expanded books and materials collection and dedicated sections for children, teens, and seniors.

## Why does Pacifica need to modernize its libraries?

The answer is simple: aging infrastructure. Sharp Park Library was built in 1965 – before the United States put a man on the moon – while Sanchez Library was completed in 1981 – the same year Ronald Reagan became president. Pacifica is now the only city in the San Mateo County Libraries that has not renovated its library buildings.

Just as it has been updating other aging public buildings that serve its residents, such as the Civic Center Campus, Pacifica needs to update its library buildings to provide safe learning and social environments for children, teens, families, and seniors for generations to come.

## Why should Pacifica rebuild Sharp Park Library?

The 62-year-old Sharp Park Library requires such extensive repairs that it is more cost-effective to demolish it and start fresh. Attempting to repair

or renovate the Sharp Park Library building would result in the loss of collection and program areas in an already space-constrained building. Studies completed as far back as 2011 identified the building's deficiencies, and the longer the city waits to rebuild, the more costly it will be.

## What are the details of the Sharp Park Library project?

The project envisions a new, 25,000-square-foot building on the existing site that would serve as the city's main library and provide much-needed physical and family-friendly accessibility. The new Sharp Park library would expand digital and physical collections, increase access to the latest technologies, and create dedicated teen and children's gathering spaces, group study rooms, community meeting spaces, and a collaboration/maker space.

## Do we need such a large Sharp Park Library?

The proposed Sharp Park Library building's size is considered standard for a community of our size based on accepted library planning models that incorporate community needs and population. The modeling recommended a 30,000-square-foot facility to meet the community's needs, but the plan was moderately sized down 25,000 square-feet to reduce the cost and balance what can be accommodated on the site. The modernized Sharp Park Library will provide updated spaces for programming and collections aligned with those of other cities in the county.

## What are the details of the Sanchez Library project?

We are seeking to renovate and reconfigure the space and use of the 4,000-square-foot Sanchez Library into an "Open Access" library model,

meaning residents will be able to access the library building for programming, community space, library materials and technology at all hours, even without library staff present. Renovations to the building will create more flexible, accessible community spaces that can be programmed for events and departments outside of regular library services. While librarians will continue to maintain onsite hours at Sanchez Library, visitors will be able to use the library's community spaces and resources even when library staff is not present. These updates will allow us to extend the life of a beloved public building and community space while improving service and access for residents.

### **How does the new Sanchez Library Outpost tie into the Library Modernization Project?**

San Mateo County Libraries has chosen Sanchez Library as the location of its first Library Outpost, complete with a self-service kiosk and outdoor furniture now available 24/7. While the Outpost is separate from the Library Modernization Project, it is a first step toward making Pacifica's libraries more modern and accessible while better utilizing the city's resources.

### **Do we need two library branches?**

The community voice has been clear—due to Pacifica's geography, the people of Pacifica want two libraries. By modernizing both branches, Pacifica can ensure all residents have access to expanded library services.

### **Why are libraries important?**

Libraries are a critical part of a city's fabric, which is why every other city in San Mateo County Libraries system has new or renovated libraries. Free and open to the public, statistics show that libraries continue to be an important third space, separate from the home and work. It's where students do homework, the community accesses free programs, and residents rent laptops and use free Wi-Fi – just to name a few.

Libraries also save residents money. A single library user who reads only one book per month could save around \$300 per year by using their local library rather than spending \$25 on average for a book. When including access to movies, video games, internet, and other resources, households could save more than \$1,000 annually.

### **What is the projected cost of the Pacifica Library Modernization Project?**

A 25,000-square-foot Sharp Park Library with a renovated Sanchez Library is anticipated to cost approximately \$60 million. The longer the city waits to replace and update its aging buildings, the more costly it will be.

### **What funding sources are being considered?**

We are currently exploring financial resources that could cover some of these costs. These include low- or no-interest loans, public-private partnerships such as donor recognition options, support from the County, a potential bond measure, and grant funding. We will share more details as they become available.

### **Where are you at in the Library Modernization Project process?**

Site analysis and conceptual designs for the new Sharp Park Library and renovated Sanchez Library were completed in 2019 following extensive community input. We are currently conducting outreach and engaging with the community on the importance of our libraries and the critical services they offer. We also continue to evaluate the best options for project funding and will share more information about a timeline and updated budget when the information becomes available.

### **How can I support the Pacifica Library Modernization Project?**

You can visit our project website using the QR code below and sign up for our mailing list.

