

Key Library Dates and Information

Nov. 4, 2008: Measure N is on the ballot for Palo Alto voters. If passed (requires 2/3 approval), general obligation bonds up to \$76 million can be issued to fund the planned facility improvements at Mitchell Park Library and Community Center, Main Library, and Downtown Library.

Aug. 4, 2008: City Council adopts ordinance placing library/community center facility improvements projects on the November 4, 2008 ballot.

July 21, 2008: City Council confirms approval of Mitigated Negative Declaration for improvements to the Mitchell Park Library and Community Center and an addendum to the final EIR for improvements to Main Library; and introduces an ordinance to place a bond measure on the November 4, 2008 ballot.

July 7, 2008: City Council reviews results of June 2008 telephone poll on a library/community center bond measure. Council votes to move forward with a November 2008 bond measure and to incorporate LEED Gold building standards in the new Mitchell Park Library/Community Center facility.

May 2008: Group 4 Architecture completes schematic design (35%) for a 52,000 square foot facility (37,000 sf library and 15,000 sf community center) at Mitchell Park; a renovation and expansion (for community program room and group study rooms) of Main; and an interior renovation of Downtown Library.

Oct. 1, 2007: City Council reviews presentation on voter focus groups/outreach key findings; City Council approves moving forward with design of joint Mitchell Park library/community center option.

Sept. 29, 2007: Children's Library reopens to the public after a 2-year renovation and expansion construction project. Funded from City's infrastructure reserve (\$1.9 M), fundraising by Friends and Foundation (\$1.2 M plus another \$400,000 for FF&E), and Federal HUD grants (\$357,000), sale of transferable development rights (\$237,500), and other sources (\$60,000), building is expanded to 6,045 sf.

Sept. 10, 2007: City Auditor presents Audit of Library Operations to City Council. Audit includes 32 recommendations in areas of facility improvements, staff workload and use of technology, staffing and volunteers, and internal controls over inventory and cash handling.

March 5, 2007: City Council discusses results of February 2007 telephone survey on library and public safety issues.

January 2007: City Council identifies public safety building and library/community center projects as a Top 4 priority.

December 11, 2006: City Council approves highest level of collection, technology and facility recommendations in the LSMAR report and directs staff to refine costs to improve library facilities; also, Council directs staff to undertake community polling prior to making any final decisions on library service and facility enhancements (scope of polling also includes public safety building).

December 4, 2006: Council receives LAC's final LSMAR report and Group 4 Architecture study on library space needs at Mitchell Park, Main and Downtown libraries. The study recommended increasing Mitchell Park Library from its current 9,378 square feet to a total of 28,429-33,413 square feet; expanding the 26,800 square feet at Main by between 1,763 and 5,509 square feet; and completing an interior renovation to the 8,774 square foot Downtown Library.

Sept. 11, 2006: Council approves contract with Group 4 Architecture to complete a space study for the Mitchell Park Library. Scope of work expanded to include analysis of Main and Downtown libraries.

June 2006: Council adopts 2006-07 Capital Budget, including a \$2.8 million project for a major infrastructure upgrade for College Terrace Library and Child Care Center. This project was later increased to \$4.0 million in the 2008-09 CIP budget. Design is now underway with construction scheduled to begin in Summer 2009.

May 15, 2006: Council discusses LAC's interim report, "Library Service Model Analysis and Recommendations" (LSMAR). Council conceptually approves maintaining all 5 library locations, improving Mitchell Park to a full service library on par with Main Library, and expanding service and collections across the library system (without additional burden on the general fund). Council also provides a number of directives to the LAC for completion of their report.

January 21, 2006: City Council identifies infrastructure improvements for public safety building and library system as a Top 3 priority.

February 15, 2005: Council approves, as part of the 2004-05 mid-year budget, a library space reconfiguration project for the Main Library. In October 2006, funding for this project was increased for a total allocation of \$510,000. The project included moving Technical Services in July 2006 from Main Library into a space previously occupied by City IT staff at the Downtown Library. This allowed conversion of some staff space at Main to public use space.

December 13, 2004: City Council rejects recommendation of Library Director to establish a single full-service library in Palo Alto at either Mitchell Park or Main libraries, maintain these sites in addition to Children's Library, and convert College Terrace and Downtown libraries to other community uses. Council directs LAC to recommend a

strategy for creating a full service library at an existing or another site, to maintain neighborhood facilities, and to recommend a redefinition of branch services.

March 1, 2004: City Council approves a cost sharing agreement between the City, the Palo Alto Library Foundation, and the Friends of the Palo Alto Library for the renovation and expansion of the Children's Library.

November 10, 2003: City Council approves ordinance to establish the Library as a separate department (previously had been a division of Community Services).

September 29, 2003: In a LAC study session, Council discusses the latest recommendations of the Advisory Commission. Council does not support closure of Downtown to the public.

July 28, 2003: Library Advisory Commission releases its "Palo Alto Library Plan Status Report & Recommendations" that revisited the goals of its 2000 Plan. Among its recommendations to improve library services, in light of the downturn of the economy and the defeat of Measure D, is to eliminate public services and collections at the Downtown Library, reallocate Downtown staff to Main and Mitchell Park, and move Technical Services staff from Main to Downtown to free up more space for the public.

July 2003: Terman Park Library closes when former middle school site is returned to PAUSD to reopen as a school.

February 10, 2003: Council discusses staff recommendation to proceed with critical infrastructure repairs to Children's Library and Mitchell Park Library and Community Center while also developing a strategy to eventually expand Children's and either expand or replace Mitchell Park Library and expand Mitchell Park Community Center. City Council approves a public-private partnership between the City and the Friends of the Library to support the fundraising effort for the renovation and expansion of the Children's Library, following anonymous donation of \$350,000 to Friends group in January.

November 5, 2002: Library bond issue (Measure D) fails with 61.7% affirmative votes, short of the 2/3 super majority required for passage.

August 5, 2002: City Council adopts ordinance to submit to voters on a November 5, 2002 ballot a 30-year bond totaling \$49.1 million to improve and expand the Children's Library (10,700 sf total) and to construct a new combined Mitchell Park Library and Community Center (63,800 sf total).

July 2001: City Council directs staff to prepare, by June 2002 conceptual designs, associated cost estimates, and to complete environmental review of the five community facility projects being considered for inclusion in a bond measure on the November 2002 ballot (Main Library, Children's Library, Mitchell Park Library and Community Center, Art Center).

October 2000: City Council conceptually approves the LAC's "New Library Plan" and directs staff to proceed with the development of the first phase of the plan, components of which include developing feasibility and costing studies for the expansion of the "resource libraries."

May 2000: LAC releases its "New Library Plan" which recommends maintaining all six branch libraries, but developing Main/Children's and Mitchell Park into two "Resource Libraries" (one serving north and one serving south Palo Alto) by doubling and tripling the size of each, respectively. The Plan also recommends increasing staffing and support for collections.

February 16, 1999: City Council appoints members to the newly-established Library Advisory Commission (LAC) and directs the LAC to review the draft plan referred to Policy and Services and make recommendations for improvements to library resources. The LAC begins the review of the plan and the development of a new long-range plan for library services.

March 16, 1998: City Manager presents a draft Library Master Plan, developed by City staff, recommending the eventual closure of three of the six branch libraries. The draft was referred to the Council Policy and Services Committee but was put on hold given the controversial recommendations.