

FAQs: Mitchell Park Library & Community Center



1. When will the Mitchell Park Library and Community Center be open to the public?

The City will officially open its brand new Library and Community Center complex in 2014. Although construction will be completed two months before, City staff will need to move in and set up offices, meeting rooms and computers, stack and organize books and media, and test-drive and adjust staff and customer operations to this magnificent new facility. It has been very challenging keeping this project moving forward with the contractor. We now estimate that the building complex is approximately 90% complete. The foundation is built; the walls are up, the roof is on, the building shell is watertight; the roof solar system is installed; the electrical, telemetry, cabling and plumbing runs have been installed in the walls; and the interior drywall is installed. The key upcoming milestones are fine-tuning the mechanical and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, and installing the electronic equipment and furniture systems.

2. What is causing the delay in completion of the Mitchell Park Library and Community Center?

With any new construction project of this size and complexity, there can be delays. On this project, the primary factor has been the General Contractor's lack of coordination with and oversight of its subcontractors as well as deficient work that needs to be repaired and rechecked. The complexity of the building design and state-of-the-art gold Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) elements also make this a more complex project than most buildings. Despite these challenges, the City remains insistent upon achieving the highest building standards and obtaining the LEED gold certification that was originally specified for this project and the City has is requiring correction of all substandard work. This Library and Community Center will serve Palo Alto for generations to come, and while we regret the project falling behind schedule, our focus is ensuring quality and a building built to last.

3. Does the Mitchell Park Library and Community Center project remain under budget?

Yes, despite the delay in project completion, the Mitchell Park Library and Community Center remains under budget. Our construction contract amount, even with the addition of Change Orders to date, is approximately \$ 28 Million, which is below the Engineer's Estimate Of \$ 32 Million. While more change orders are anticipated, we expect the contract amount to remain below the Engineer's Estimate.

4. Is the delay affecting the building quality of the Mitchell Park Library and Community Center?

Construction quality remains our highest priority on this project. Although the contractor and its subcontractors have made numerous errors, we are requiring all errors be fixed and are monitoring this correction work extremely closely. Even if this iterative process causes additional scheduling delays, we will not accept any substandard work on this City building project.

5. Is there anything the City can do to speed up project completion?

We are working to speed up project completion while staying focused on building quality. We have added extra hours for our Building Inspectors to avoid delays associated with the inspection function. Additionally, we have used a separate contractor to perform certain work and are considering expanding this approach. We will try to parallel track as much interior work as possible.

6. Will the City pursue action against the contractors involved in the MPLCC delays?

We remain focused on ensuring high quality construction and materials, managing project costs and working with the contractor to finish the project. At this point, however, Flintco is out of contract compliance regarding the project schedule, which results in financial penalties/liquidated damages for lack of completion of \$2,500 per day. This amount can be deducted from future progress payments or deducted from the retention at the end of the project. The City has obtained outside legal counsel to consider its options. [Read the latest letter](#) to the Contractor.

7. What will the City do differently on the Main Library project to keep it on schedule?

Fortunately, the Main Library project has much more in common with our most recently completed renovation projects such as the Art Center, Downtown Library and College Terrace Library than with the massive Mitchell Park Library and Community Center building complex. We selected Nova Partners to work on the Main Library project because they successfully managed the Art Center renovation, the Children's Library construction and College Terrace renovation. We have also included a process for qualifying subcontractors.

Additional information regarding this project is available on the City's website at:

<http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/topics/projects/facilities/library/default.asp>

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