BRANCH LIBRARY
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

City & County of San Francisco
Branch Library Improvement Program

New Ortega Branch Library
Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why are we building a new branch library?
A. We voted to renovate and build new branch libraries across the City – its happening!
In November 2000, the voters passed a bond measure for $106 million to upgrade San Francisco's branch library system and in November 2007, the voters overwhelmingly passed Proposition D authorizing additional funding to improve the branches. Because of the increased service needs from adjacent schools, the desire to make the branch more visible, the community support for a new branch, and the difficulty meeting the service needs with a renovation, the Library decided to build a new Ortega Branch Library.

Q. What will be some of the benefits of the new branch?

- Library will be visible from Ortega Street
- Expanded collections of books, CDs, DVDs & other materials
- Community room for library programs such as story time and after school homework help, with after hours access for community meetings
- Fully accessible
- Views of the ocean
- Flexible design to accommodate future technologies
- Increased Chinese language collection
- Prominent reading area
- Enclosed study room
- Expanded children's area and space to accommodate school visits
- More functional staff work areas
- A designated teen area
- New furniture
- Clear signage
- More computers
- Wireless (Wi-Fi) access to the internet
- Express self-checkout machines
- A variety of seating choices, including lounge and reader seats
- Accessible restrooms
- 24-hour book return
- Maximum use of natural light
- Public art
- Green Building (LEED Silver)

Q. How big will the new branch library be?
A. The new branch will be one story high and approximately 9,000 square feet.

Q. Where will the new branch library be located?
A. On the same site, but closer to Ortega Street. The existing branch will be demolished, except for a section that currently houses the staff work room and boiler. That section will remain attached to the Recreation and Park building.

Q. Who are the architects?
A. Bureau of Architecture's Library Design Studio, SF Department of Public Works.

Q. When will it be built?
A. The project is scheduled to start construction in summer 2009 and open in late 2010. Construction may be delayed due to design issues, complications from the bidding, contracting or permit process, or other matters.

Q. Will the branch library close during construction?
A. Yes. The current branch will be demolished to make room for the new building. During construction, partial library services will be provided in a temporary site adjacent to the Recreation Center. Children's programs will be held at the Recreation Center or at another community facility. During demolition, limited bookmobile service will be provided close by.

Q. Will the amount of books increase?
A. Yes. The materials (books, CDs, DVDs, books on tape, etc.) collection will expand. There will also be additional tables, chairs, and computers.

Q. What happens to the existing furniture?
A. The furniture will be replaced. The Library has developed interior design guidelines to help the architects and staff choose appropriate furniture based on functionality, ergonomics, durability, maintenance, flexibility, and sustainability.

Q. Will there be Public Art?
A. Yes. The Arts Commission will establish a Community Artist Selection Panel who will review a pool of artists and conduct a community process to select an artist.

Q. Is the community involved in the design process?
A. Yes. A community needs assessment was conducted, that included interviews with community stakeholders about materials, facilities, and services and a community survey analysis. Four community meetings were held (September 2003, October 2003, January 2008, & July 2008) to discuss services and designs. The Library Commission held a public Peer Review in February 2008 where an independent architect and library professional reviewed the design.

Q. How much will it cost and where does the money come from to build the new branch?
A. On March 1, 2007, the Library Commission voted to increase the budget of the Ortega project from $3.4 million to $7.9 million in order to build a new branch rather than the originally planned renovation. Funds will come from the November 2000 library bond measure and the recent passage of Proposition D. All designs are subject to change in order to meet the fixed budget limit.

Q. Are there other funds that need to be raised?
A. Yes, the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library are raising funds from private donations for new furniture, fixtures, and equipment for the branch library. For information on the neighborhood capital campaign, call (415) 626-7512 ext. 101.

Q. How do I find out more information about the new branch?
A. Contact the Branch Library Improvement Program at (415) 557-4354, check www.sfpl.org, or email BLIP@sfpl.org.