City & County of San Francisco
Branch Library Improvement Program

Park Branch Library Renovation
Frequently Asked Questions

What are the plans for the branch?
The Park Branch Library was built in 1909 in the Neo-Classical style. In the early 1990's, it was seismically upgraded and brought into compliance for disabled access. The interior of the facility will be remodeled, while preserving its historic character.

What will be some of the benefits of the renovated branch?

- Expanded collection capacity of books, CDs, DVDs, & other materials
- Two new restrooms downstairs
- A renovated family restroom upstairs
- New energy efficient heating system
- All new, energy efficient lighting with pendant light fixtures upstairs
- Improved ventilation
- Reconfigured Program Room with state of the art audio visual equipment, new lights & flooring
- Designated Teen Area
- Children's Area with interactive early learning features
- More computers
- New and restored seating, with a variety of choices
- Refurbished historic shelving, with new shelving within the room
- Wireless (Wi-Fi) access to the internet
- Express self-check out machines
- Improved electrical systems
- More functional & ergonomic staff work areas
- New outside after hours book drop unit
- Shelving appropriate to each collection
- New display areas
- More stroller parking
- Clearer signage
- Green Building (LEED Silver)

When will the branch be closed and for how long?
The branch is scheduled to close for construction in summer 2009 and reopen about 1 year later. Construction is estimated at about 9 months, however additional time is needed to move out, conduct hazardous material abatement, and move back in. During renovation, library services will be provided by holding programs at neighborhood schools and community centers and by regular bookmobile service in the neighborhood. Closing may be delayed due to design issues, complications arising from the bidding, contracting or permit process, or other matters.

Who are the architects?
The joint venture team of Field Paoli and Joseph Chow & Associates.

Why does the branch need to close during construction?
The extent of work involved can only be done efficiently if the contractor has access to the entire facility at the same time. There will be work done on the heating system, plumbing, electrical, lighting and data and the work between the two floors has to be coordinated. It's also safer not to have the public in the building during construction.

Will the amount of books increase?
After the interior remodel, the collection (books, CDs, DVDs, audio books, etc.) capacity will increase slightly. New materials will be purchased during closure to keep the collection current. Also, materials will be easier to find on new shelves in an improved layout. The size of the building is not increasing.

What happens to the existing furniture?
Much of the existing furniture will be restored and some will be replaced. The original historic perimeter shelving & trim will be restored. The Library has developed interior design guidelines to help architects and staff choose appropriate furniture based on functionality, ergonomics, durability, maintenance, flexibility, sustainability, as well as the architectural period.

Is the community involved in the design process?
Yes. A survey was conducted in May 2007, where 600 people gave their opinion about materials, facilities, and services at the branch. Three community meetings took place at the branch to discuss designs (July 2008 and January 22 & 27, 2009). In February 2009, the Library Commission will hold a Peer Review where an independent architect and library professional will publicly review the design. As the design process moves forward, the Library will hold additional community meetings.

Where does the money come from to renovate the branch?
In November 2000, the voters overwhelmingly passed a bond measure for $106 million to upgrade San Francisco's branch library system. The bond's priorities are to reduce seismic risk, meet modern technological needs and current code requirements, comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and provide spaces that are responsive to current services, yet flexible enough to meet future needs. Even though some modifications were made in the early 90's, the building needs system upgrades and an internal remodel. In addition, while the bond pays for a significant portion of the costs, it does not pay for furniture, fixtures, and equipment. The Friends of the San Francisco Public Library will raise $16 million from private donations to pay for these costs. Call (415) 626-7512 x 103 to help with the Friends campaign.

How much does it cost to remodel the Park Branch?
The project has a budget of about $1.6 million to remodel the building, not including furniture and equipment. All designs are subject to change to meet this fixed budget limit.

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