



City & County of San Francisco Branch Library Improvement Program

Sunset Branch Library Renovation Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What are the plans for the branch?

A. The Sunset Branch Library is an historic two-level Carnegie library built in 1918. In 1992, it was seismically upgraded and brought into compliance for disabled access. The interior of the facility will be remodeled, while preserving its historic character.

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

- After hours book drop at street level
- More fully accessible public restrooms
- New Program Room downstairs for after school homework, story time, and other library and community programs
- Designated Teen Area
- More comfortable seating and a variety of seating choices
- Reconfigured, more welcoming Children's Room
- More computers
- Wireless (Wi-Fi) access to the internet
- Express self-check out machines
- Improved lighting and power
- More functional staff work areas both upstairs and downstairs

Q. When will the branch be closed and for how long?

A. The branch closed for move out, abatement and construction in September 2005 and will reopen on March 31, 2007. During the renovation, library services were provided by increasing hours at the nearby Parkside and Ortega branches, holding storytimes at Sunrise Residence, 1601 – 19th Avenue (Tuesdays at 10:30 am), lapsits at the Jefferson School Childcare Center, 1325 – 18th Avenue (Saturdays at 10:30 am) and by a bookmobile at Jefferson Elementary School and Andronico's parking lot two to three days a week. During closure, a portion of the Russian language collection was moved to the Parkside branch and a portion of the Chinese language collection was moved to the Parkside, Ortega, and Anza branches. For interim services information, call 557-4353.

Q. Is the building an historic Landmark?

A. The building has been given Landmark status. The renovation plans conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. The original Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board nomination contains vital information about significant features to retain. Also, the project received a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Planning Department ensuring that its historic features are preserved.

Q. Who are the architects?

A. Fougeron Architecture of San Francisco

Q. Will the amount of books increase?

A. The branch has a collection size of approximately 55,000 items, including 5,600 Chinese language items and small Russian and Vietnamese collections. After the interior renovation, the collection (books, CDs, DVDs, videos, audio books, etc.) size will remain substantially the same. 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.

Q. What happens to the existing furniture?

A. The furniture will be replaced. The original historic perimeter shelving and trims will remain. 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.

Q. Is the community involved in the design process?

A. Yes. A survey was conducted in September/October 2003, where 846 people gave their opinion about materials, facilities, and services at the branch. Three community meetings took place at the branch to discuss designs (February 2004, April 2004, and May 2005). In May 2004, the Library Commission held a Peer Review where an independent architect, historic preservationist and an interior designer publicly reviewed the design. On September 10, 2005, a closing party was held to celebrate the renovation.

Q. Where does the money come from to renovate the branch?

A. 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 101 to help with the Friends campaign.

Q. How much does construction cost for the Sunset Branch?

A. The project cost about \$1.5 million to renovate the building, not including furniture and equipment. All designs are subject to change to meet this fixed budget limit.

Q. How do I find out more information about my branch renovation?

A. Contact the Branch Library Improvement Program at (415) 557-4354, check www.sfpl.org, or email BLIP@sfpl.org.