



Library Improvement Plan: Frequently Asked Questions

“A library outranks any other one thing a community can do to benefit its people.”

—Andrew Carnegie

How will the plan improve the library?

The library's strategic planning committee has produced a detailed plan for improvement in three areas:

- **Space.** A combination of new construction and renovation would create over 18,000 sq./ft. of space, doubling the public space available to library patrons.
- **Staff.** A staff increase would allow a major extension of library hours and library services including children's services, teen services and programs, computer services, and more quality programs for seniors and other adults.
- **Stuff.** The increase in new materials includes books, dvds, audiobooks, cds, and online databases.

The library's specific budget plan can be found online at <http://ferndalepubliclibrary.googlepages.com>

What's in it for Ferndale?

Studies show overwhelmingly that better libraries promote economic development, help generate business and create jobs and improve property values. An improved library will serve as the focal point for our community, giving individuals, couples, families, and businesses a reason to move here and giving our long-term residents another reason to stay.

Could the library make do with less?

Not if it wants to meet the needs voiced by Ferndale's citizens. Residents' unmet library needs have resulted from three decades of declining library investment, particularly with regard to the library facility, which has not seen a major improvement since it was built fifty years ago. The library improvement plan responds directly to the concerns expressed by Ferndale residents in two large community surveys. Our extensive strategic planning process identified specific needs and found ways to get the largest return for our citizens with the smallest investment. By using creative and energy-saving design and efficient use of space and services, the library can add new space and renovate existing space while keeping the cost per square foot modest compared to library projects in neighboring communities. The plan is the most cost efficient way to add capacity.

How much will this cost me as a homeowner?

The cost depends on your current tax assessment. The plan will cost 2.2 cents for every dollar you now pay in property taxes. The average homeowner in Ferndale has a State Equalized Value (SEV) of around \$65,000. At this rate, the cost of the plan is \$65 per year or \$5.41 per month. For those who purchased homes before 1990, the plan will cost an average of only \$38 per year or \$3.15 per month.

Is a library millage really necessary?

Yes. Americans—and Ferndale residents in particular—have always understood libraries to be essential for a thriving community, on par with public schools and public safety. Because libraries are a long-term investment, their value can sometimes be overlooked. Nearly three decades of neglect have left Ferndale's library without the space or resources it needs to meet its responsibility to the local community.

Why can't I just go to other libraries?

It is difficult to overestimate the value of a nearby, walk-able library both for convenience of individual residents—most live less than a mile away—and for the community as a whole. The library is Ferndale's “front porch,” a place for residents to encounter one another, talk about important ideas, share local news, and work together for the benefit of the city or their local business or community group. Unfortunately, many Ferndale residents report traveling to other communities to find the library resources that they would prefer to have closer to home. The improvement plan will build a library for Ferndale citizens to come home to.

Where can I find more information?

More questions and answers—and much more information about the Library's improvement plan and its positive impact on the community—can be found online at <http://ferndalepubliclibrary.googlepages.com> or you can come and visit the library itself and pick up paper copies along with a new library card and access to our new downloadable audiobooks.

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