

Executive Director's Message

Planning is the foundation to meeting community needs

Good buildings start with solid ground and strong foundations. So too, does planning for good buildings. I believe this Sno-Isle Libraries Capital Facilities Plan is based on the solid ground of community involvement and good data that will be the foundation ensuring library buildings continue to meet community and customer needs in our region over the next 10 years.

This is more than Sno-Isle Libraries' plan, this document reflects what we heard from our communities and customers. We asked questions and listened. We received thousands of comments through two online surveys and hundreds of community and social media conversations. Residents told us they love their libraries and want more space to read, to study and to gather as a community. They want more access to technology at the library, even when it may be available at home.

We reviewed data on how customers use public libraries and commissioned a study to review national trends in libraries, technology and customer demographics.

We learned that most of our libraries meet current community needs and will continue to do so with regular ongoing maintenance. It also became evident that a few communities have outgrown their libraries and we need to work with them to replace those facilities.

We found four opportunities to show our commitment to the strategic value of free and equal access to public libraries. Tens of thousands of residents in three rapidly growing areas do not have adequate access to a public library. Plans by a fourth community for major economic development and transportation investments may call for a new, larger library in that area.

Forty years ago, the Freeland Library was a 9x12-foot corner of Bettie B's dress shop. Changing-room curtains were pulled back to accommodate story-time sessions for children. As the community's needs grew, so did the library and the building that now stands in Freeland. This is a great example of the results of planning and adapting to meet the community needs.

Customers are using 21 libraries across Snohomish and Island counties to transform themselves. They are borrowing books, using technology, attending programs, searching for jobs and using spaces to study and collaborate.

Sno-Isle Libraries remains committed to public stewardship of world-class library services, resources and accessibly located community libraries. The partnership with each of our communities is strong and will guide us in meeting the needs of library customers today and tomorrow.



Jonalyn Woolf-Ivory
Executive Director
Sno-Isle Libraries