

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why do we need a new library?

Our current 2,800-square-foot library welcomes more than 16,000 visits each year, and that number continues to grow. A recent study funded by the Library found that a community of our size—particularly when our substantial seasonal population is taken into account—could support a library of more than 10,000 square feet. Our current facility simply does not have the space needed to adequately serve the community today or in the years ahead.

2. What are the limitations of the current facility?

The current library, constructed in 1968, has no public restrooms and too few electrical outlets for patrons to routinely use. It lacks the flexible spaces needed to meet the expectations of a modern library. It is also not ADA compliant, preventing members of our community from enjoying access to library services and facilities.

3. Can the current facility be renovated to meet the community's needs?

Because of the building's age, limited footprint, and structural constraints, the cost of renovating and expanding it would be substantial. Even with an addition, the property would not provide the amount or variety of space needed to serve the community well into the future.

4. Why the Northport Pub and Grill building?

The Northport Pub and Grill building has enough adaptable space to create a library that can grow and adjust as the community's needs change. A priority was to remain within the Village, close to the school and other community resources, while also finding an existing building that could meet the Library's needs without the unnecessary expense and environmental impact of demolition and new construction.

5. What will happen to the bowling alley and liquor license?

They will be sold separately. The hope is that an interested entrepreneur will purchase the bowling alley equipment and liquor license and find a new Northport location where these amenities can continue to be enjoyed by the community.

6. Will community meeting space be available?

Yes! Plans include a large, flexible meeting room that will be available for community organizations, educational programs, and more. The room will have modern audiovisual equipment to support presentations, hybrid gatherings, and online meetings. The space is expected to accommodate more than 100 people and will be designed so that it can be divided into two smaller meeting areas when needed. It will also be separated from the main library, allowing it to be used outside regular library hours.

7. How will the kitchen be used?

The kitchen will support library programs, community meetings, and catered events held in the meeting space. It may also create opportunities for cooking demonstrations, nutrition programs, educational activities, and more.

8. Will there be smaller meeting rooms and study spaces?

Yes! Libraries are experiencing growing demand for small conference rooms, private workspaces, and quiet study areas. The new facility will include rooms that can be reserved for individual work, tutoring, small meetings, remote appointments, and group study. These spaces will have reliable, high-speed Wi-Fi.

9. Will there be a dedicated space for children?

Yes! The new facility will include a welcoming children's area designed especially for young readers and their caregivers, with appropriately sized shelving, comfortable seating, space to explore, and convenient access to children's materials. The additional space will also allow the Library to expand its children's programming throughout the year.

10. Will there be a dedicated space for teens?

Yes! The new facility will provide a dedicated teen area with age-appropriate books and resources, comfortable seating, access to technology, and space for both individual and collaborative work. A dedicated teen space will allow them greater opportunities to connect with one another, explore their interests, participate in programs, and be involved in their community.

11. Will the new building allow for expanded programming?

Yes! Staff are eager to utilize the versatile layout to offer a wider array of offerings for residents.

12. What about the books?

Books will remain at the heart of the Library. The new facility will allow us to offer a larger and more diverse collection while making shelves easier to navigate and more accessible.

13. How can I help?

The Library Capital Campaign Committee is currently conducting the leadership phase of the campaign. During this initial phase, the committee is meeting with individuals, families, businesses, and organizations that may be able to make significant early commitments toward the purchase and renovation of the building. A broader public campaign will follow, giving everyone in the community an opportunity to participate. If you or someone you know may be interested in discussing a leadership gift of \$50,000 or more, please contact the Library or a member of the Capital Campaign Committee. Gifts to the Library Facilities Fund are being managed by the Leelanau Township Community Foundation, which can provide information about the different ways to contribute.

As the campaign moves forward, we will also need volunteers to assist with fundraising activities, community outreach, and special events. Whether through a leadership gift, a smaller contribution, volunteer service, or simply helping us share this vision, every form of support will help bring a new library to life.

We hope everyone will find a way to participate—both big and small—as we create a library that will serve Northport, Omena, and all of Leelanau Township, for generations to come.