



Saint Paul  
Public Library

# Transforming Libraries Update

Library Board

February 4, 2026

# Introduction

Marika Staloch  
Library Project Manager

Joshua Schaffer  
Deputy Director of Operations

# Transforming Libraries

Facility Investments at three library locations:

- Hamline Midway
- Hayden Heights
- Riverview

Investments in essential infrastructure in all locations:

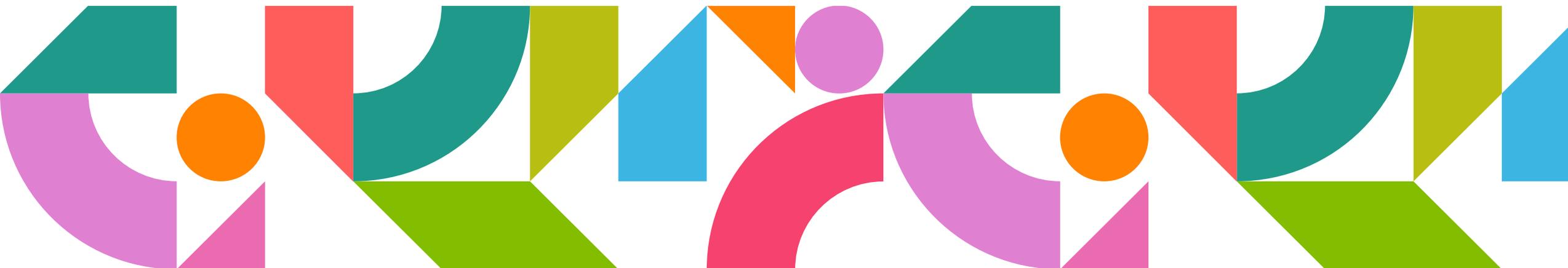
- Technology-rich spaces
- Play & Learn

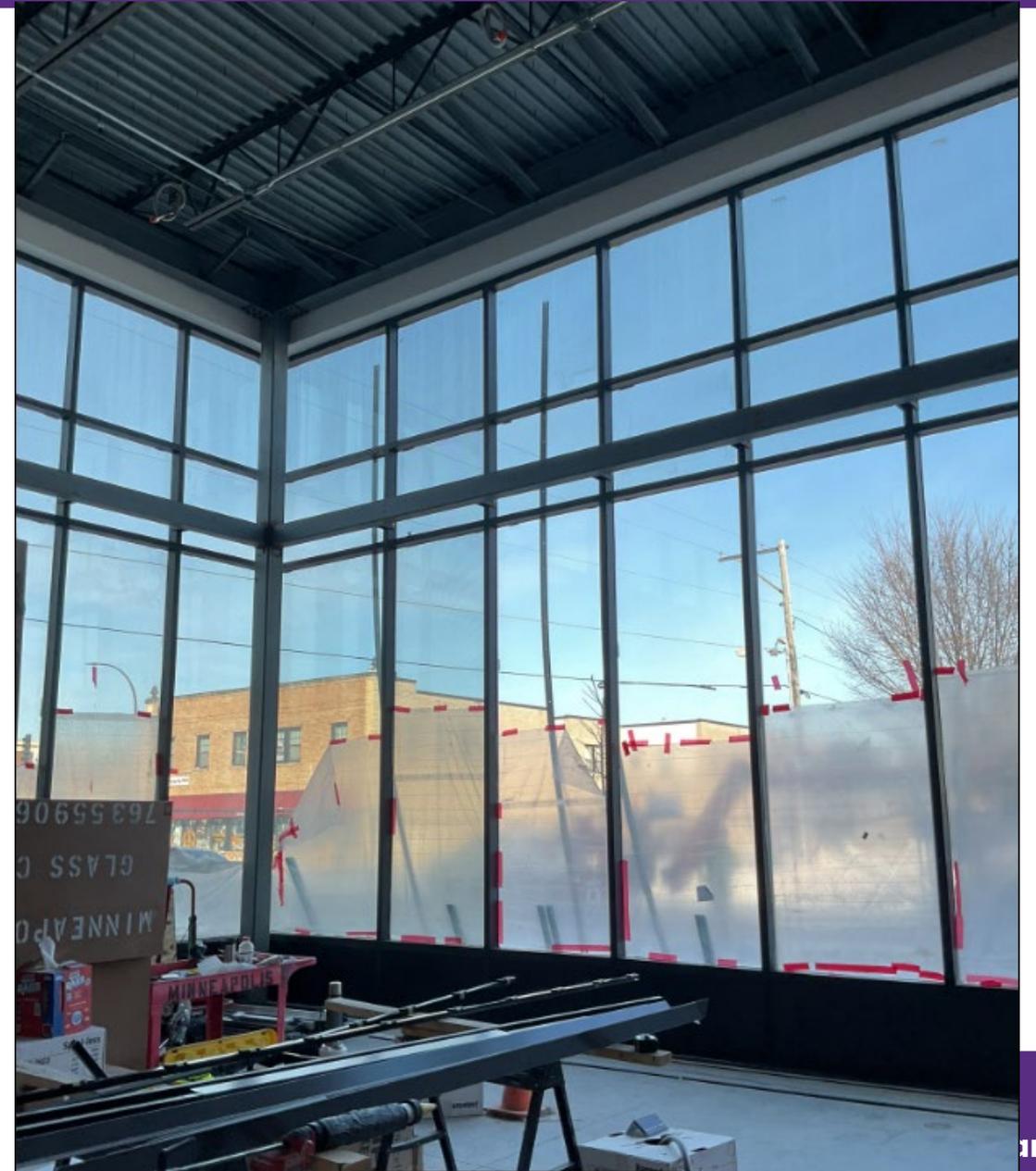
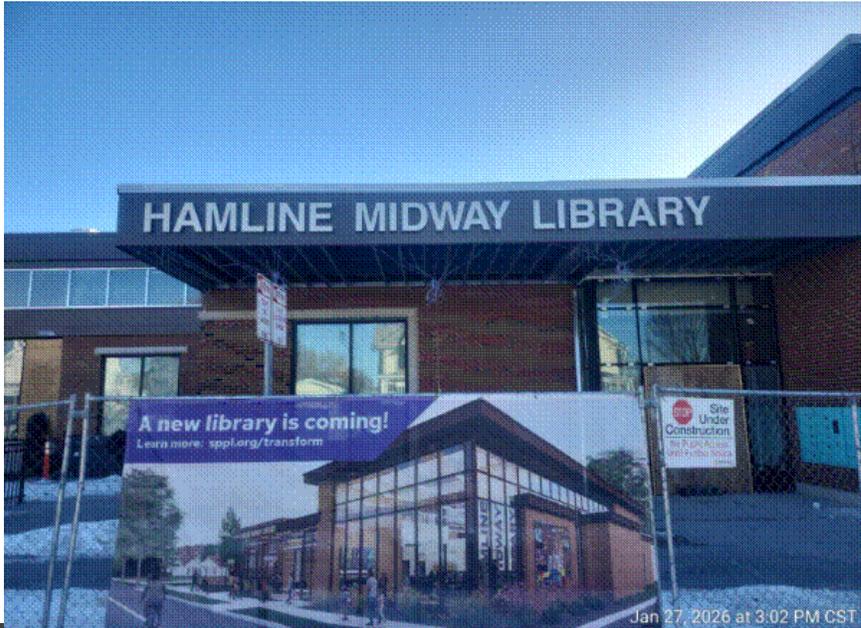
# Shifting from Planning to Implementation

- Actively engaged in managing and completing projects
- Continuing fundraising efforts through all avenues
- Listening to the needs of patrons and staff
- Balancing priorities while maintaining focus on established timelines



# Hamline Midway



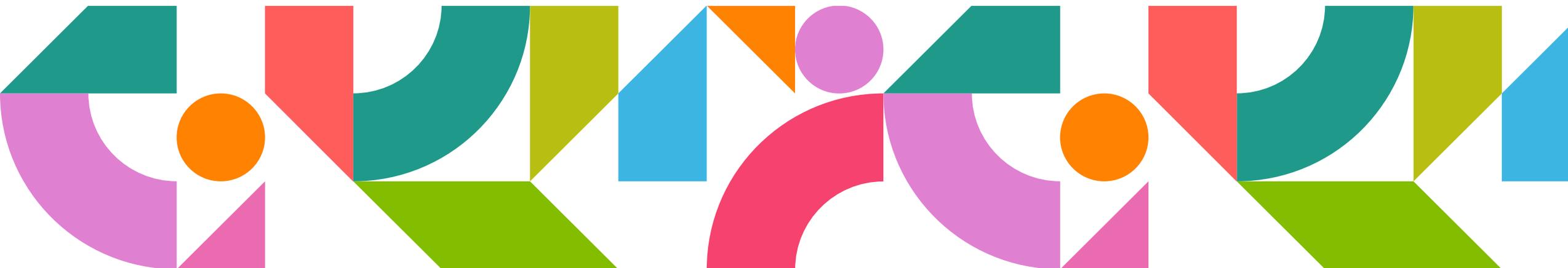


# Hamline Timeline

- 2018 – 2022:** Community Engagement
- March 2023:** Design & Construction documents complete (LSE)
- May 2023:** Closed library to the public
- June 2023:** Litigation paused project
- October 2024:** Legal ruling in favor of SPPL
- May 2025:** Construction began (Stahl)
- 
- By late 2026:** Open to public



# Hayden Heights Library





HAYDEN HEIGHTS LIBRARY

LIBRARY

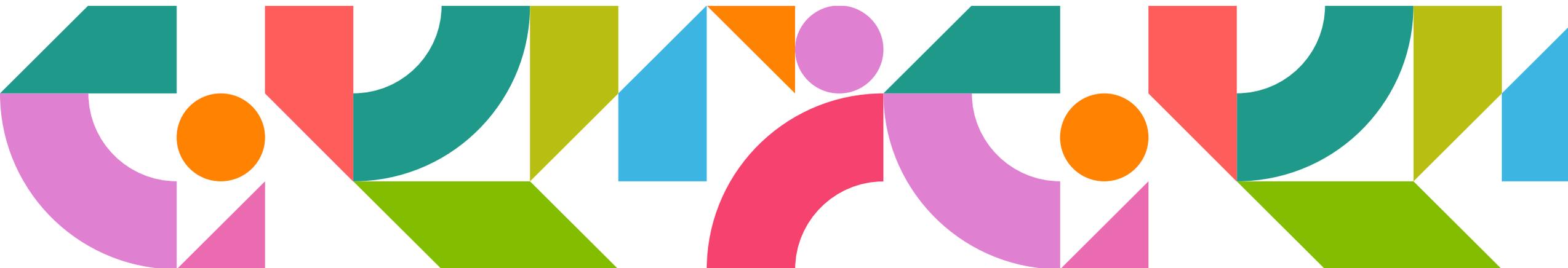


# Hayden Heights Timeline

- 2018 – 2022:** Community Engagement
- Dec. 2025:** Design & Construction documents complete (LSE)
- Jan 2026:** Bid process open
- Feb 2026:** Award General Contractor bid
- Spring 2026:** Close library to the public &  
Begin construction
- 
- Q4 2027:** Open to public



# Technology Rich Libraries



# Technology Rich Goals – tech and more

## **Comfortable Meeting & Study Spaces**

- Furniture upgrades
- Lighting upgrades
- Soundproofing

## **Accessible Meeting & Study Spaces**

- Hearing loops
- Highly visible monitors
- Easily movable furniture

## **Safe Meeting & Study Spaces**

- Add or improve PA system for communication
- Improved sightlines

## **Patron Technology Needs**

- Updated technology for virtual and hybrid connection
- Access to outlets
- Improved cell phone service
- Charging stations

## **Welcoming Spaces**

- Facility upgrades
- Signage
- Storage
- Consistent experience across library locations

# 2025 Completed Projects

## Merriam Park Library – Large Meeting Room

- Removed old and broken partition wall
- Updated ceiling tiles, cracked walls, and countertops
- Added storage for new, lightweight chairs
- Increased accessibility with hearing loop and large screen monitor
- Intuitive and easily connectable A/V system for hybrid or presentation meetings
- Installed PA system to communicate building-wide

# 2025 Completed Projects

## Rice Street Library – Small Meeting Room

- Added soundproofing between bathroom & meeting room for professionalism and hearing accessibility
- Intuitive and easily connectable A/V system for hybrid or presentation meetings

## George Latimer Central – Nicholson Room

- Prepared for overhaul of upstairs ‘Saint Paul Collection’ room, to become a meeting room in 2026
- Two new study rooms with tech access

# 2026 Upcoming Projects

## Rondo Community Library

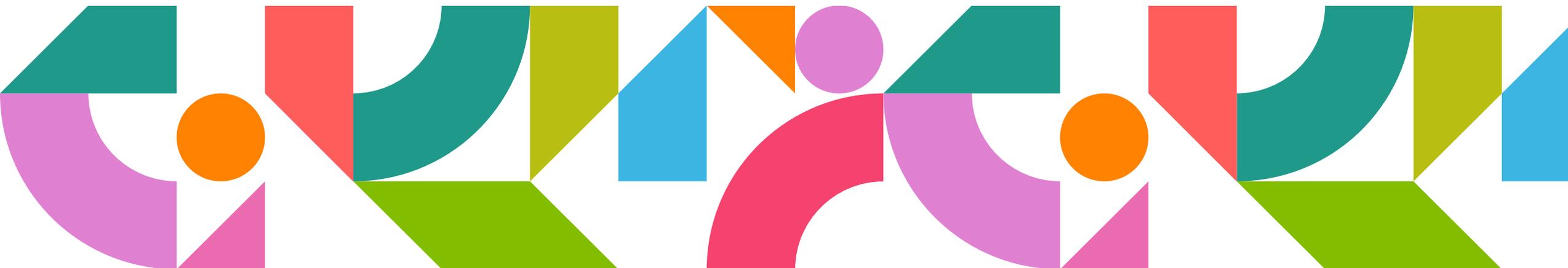
- Update meeting rooms' technology, soundproofing, sightlines, furnishings, accessibility, and safety
- Review community feedback and add elements as budget allows such as teen technology space and study rooms

## George Latimer Central – Nicholson Room

- New public meeting room in balcony completed
- Balcony co-working seating space begins



# Play & Learn Spaces



# Play & Learn Goals – beyond toys

## **Welcoming & Belonging Spaces**

- Encourage frequent return visits
- Provide cultural connection and reflect the diversity of the community

## **Playful Learning**

- Youth & caregivers are provided opportunities to engage in rich, engaging play together

## **Accessibility**

- Spaces are accessible and comfortable for all users

## **Sustainability**

- Spaces use high-quality, durable materials that stand up to heavy use and last for years

## **Flexibility & Cohesion**

- Space accommodates quiet reading, joyful playing, and programming
- All Saint Paul libraries will have familiar visuals and elements, yet maintain uniqueness of the location

## **Zoning for Functional & Safe Spaces**

- Designed with good sightlines and traffic flow

# 2026 Upcoming Projects

## Upgrades to the following Play & Learn Spaces

- Sun Ray Library
- Rondo Community Library
- Hamline Midway Library (in new building)
  
- Systemwide Design Guide for all SPPL Play & Learn Spaces

# Transforming Libraries Challenges

- Shifting federal landscape
- Cost fluctuation/tariff impacts
- Supply chain disruption
- Funding gaps
- Existing internal staff capacity
- Limited capital funds; increased interest in renovations for other buildings in future
- Evolving use patterns and needs of the public

# Why it is Important

- Equity-focused community engagement beginning in 2018 told us we needed to invest in library spaces that are
  - Safe, inviting and affirming
  - Comfortable for people of all cultures, abilities and communities
- Libraries remain essential in our city's social infrastructure for
  - Safety, shelter and to "do life"
  - Connection with other community members
  - Access to information of all kinds



# Questions

