

**NEEDHAM FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY RENOVATION PROJECT
PHASE I – YOUNG ADULT AREA DESIGN**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

MAY 2024 – ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Article #25: Appropriate for Library Renovation: Young Adult Area Design

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Why do we need to renovate the library interior?

The last major renovation of the library was completed in 2004-5. Over the past 20 years library programs, collections and functions have shifted with the changes in technology, publishing, demographics of visitors, and library patron needs. The library spaces, seating, technology, audio, digital and hard copy collections need to be adjusted to respond to these transitions and prepare for the next two decades.

Was a Feasibility Study or Master Plan completed first?

Yes, the 2022 Annual Town Meeting appropriated \$60,000 to conduct a feasibility study for the library. The Final Report for the Needham Free Public Library Space Utilization Framework Study was completed by the designer, Utile, Inc., in August 2023. A full copy of the report is available at the library reference desk and on the Library's website: <https://needhamlibrary.org/nfpl-space-utilization-framework-study/>. This study started with the library's 2023 Strategic Plan. Then the designer engaged in discussions with residents, patrons, staff, Library Trustees and Friends of the Library. Multiple issues were identified, and alternative designs were studied with conceptual cost estimates. Four priority projects were identified:

1. Create a new dedicated Teen and Tween (Young Adult) Area on the second floor,
2. Provide an improved Children's Area on the first floor,
3. Improve the Rosemary Entrance and create a multipurpose room,
4. Improve the Highland Entrance and enhance staff workspace.

PROJECT SCOPE – Phase 1

What is the scope of the Phase I -Young Adult Renovation Area?

The "Young Adult Room" was designed 20 years ago for fixed desktop computer use with a reference librarian's technological assistance. It is no longer adequately sized for all the Teens & Tweens that use the library. The built-in furniture is not flexible enough when most students have individual laptop computers. Overheating of the west facing space in the afternoon is also an issue.

The renovation proposed to expand the Young Adult study area from 800sf to about 4,000sf on the second floor, moving the glass wall to enclose a variety of seating options and collection stacks with a front desk for a young adult librarian. Seating for over 110 people will include library carrels, clusters of reading chairs, and banquets with tables and adjustable seats. This will provide space for collaborative learning, laptop desks with recharging stations and quiet reading areas. Upgrades to the HVAC system, lighting, furniture, acoustics, and interior glazed enclosure are part of the plan.

Why was this chosen to be the first renovation project?

Many High School and Middle School students use the library for study, reference research, reading and collaboration after school. We want to encourage Needham's youth to continue using the library, while addressing noise concerns expressed by other patrons. This design will help with sound isolation, sound masking and sound absorption to help address these issues.

Are there any changes to the exterior of the building?

No, all the proposed modifications will be inside the building. Some repairs / replacement of rooftop mechanical equipment will be done in parallel.

Will temporary facilities be needed during the construction project?

No temporary facilities are anticipated currently during phase I. Some collections may be relocated within the library to enable construction. The preliminary plan is to start construction over the summer months 2025.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

What is the Phase I project schedule?

The estimated Phase I schedule is as follows:

- May 2024 - Annual Town Meeting – Approval of Design Funding
- Summer 2024 - Schematic Design and preliminary cost estimates
- Fall- Winter 2024 – Detailed Design, cost estimates and permitting.
- Spring 2025 – Public Bidding process
- May 2025 – Annual Town Meeting – Approval of Construction Funding
- Summer – Fall 2025 - Construction

What is the proposed timing for future phases?

For the FY25-29 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), the Library requested capital funding for the future phases on the following schedule:

Phase 2- FY27 design, FY28 construction
Phase 3 – FY29 design, FY30 construction
Phase 4- FY31 design, FY32 construction

This sequence may be modified in future CIP submissions based on the availability of funds.

PROJECT COST & FINANCING

What is the expected cost of the project?

The current estimated budget for the library renovation – Phase I -Young Adult Area project is \$2,740,000. The first part of this is requested in May ATM 2024- Warrant Article #25 totaling \$454,000 for design and related soft costs. Construction costs are currently estimated at \$2,286,000. This estimate will be updated throughout the design process.

How will the project be funded?

This initial design phase is funded through Free Cash. Construction funding may require borrowing according to the capital plan.

What are the projected costs for future phases of the library master plan?

The NFPL Space Utilization Framework Study - Final Report provided project costs in August 2024 dollars. The cost of future phases needs to be escalated to the mid-point of construction and are noted in the attached table of conceptual phasing costs.

What are the additional costs to the Town if the project is delayed?

The escalation rate is projected at 6% per year for future phases of the library renovations.