BERKELEY HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY
Extended Capital Plan 2024 - 2029

The Berkeley Heights Public Library is housed within the Berkeley Heights Municipal Complex, centrally located within walking distance of the downtown area. Welcoming and inclusive, the BHPL serves over 13,000 residents and enjoys strong community support. Berkeley Heights is an educated community with a high-achieving school district. According to the U.S. Census, about 21% of residents aged 5 years and up speak a language other than English at home, and about 16% of residents were foreign born. The community is becoming more diverse as about one-third of homeowners have moved into their units after 2010.

The BHPL fully opened to the public in the Municipal Complex in October 2021. Even before opening, the building was plagued with construction issues, including a leaky roof. The leaks have not been resolved to date, and BHPL has already replaced some new furniture and equipment due to water damage.

In fall 2023, the BHPL Director of thirty-four years retired. In summer 2024, the Children's Director/Assistant Director also retired after forty-nine years at the BHPL. A new BHPL Director joined in January 2024. A Youth Services Director has since been hired, and a new Assistant Director will begin in early 2025.

The BHPL was accepted as a member of the Main Library Alliance in 2024. Migration to this consortium is scheduled for August 2025.

The BHPL's most recent Strategic Plan (2024-2026) was developed with input from the community through surveys and focus groups. This Strategic Plan will help the BHPL work collaboratively over the next few years to meet the evolving needs of the community.

With new Library leadership, Main consortium membership and the new Strategic Plan, the Reimagining of the Berkeley Heights Public Library has begun. As the Library continues to re-assess its physical space, its technological infrastructure and services, and more broadly the BHPL's place and role for and within the community, the BHPL plans to address the following:

<u>Physical space</u>

· Reconfiguring plans include investing in purposeful shelving, furniture and other items as needed for:
*back of house spaces to maximize usage and capacity for daily operations
*changes in activity room usage to accommodate increased staff
*basement storage space to restructure, organize and maximize usage and capacity
*circulation area and back office space, in order to revamp areas to accommodate new

consortium requirements

· Accessibility, noise and odors are all problematic. The entrance doors into the Library from the lobby are kept open to allow easy patron access. Noise and odors emanating from other areas in the Municipal Complex freely travel into the Library. Plans include upgrading existing entrance doors to accessible entrance doors; these accessible doors could then be kept closed as needed during operating hours. Pursuing air filtration options for odor control would also be explored.
· Capturing under-utilized upper floor lobby space would provide an extension of space for BHPL usage. Installing sound dampening panels on walls and ceiling could increase usability.
· Upgrading from builder-grade door keys to keyless ID card entries on all interior Library doors will provide efficiency and safety.
· Installing display space for historical artifacts related to BHPL.
· Improving building signage (interior and exterior), including the addition of digital signage.

Technology

· In coordination with the Main technical team, the BHPL is working on a complete upgrade of technological infrastructure, in addition to planning for a replacement cycle for technology needs.
· Broader plans include adding mobile workstations and state-of-art computer labs.

Other Capital Expenses

· Community Outreach is a priority. Long term planning includes:
  *providing mobile services to patrons which may require the purchase of a vehicle
  *satellite or pop-up locations with book circulation via a self-service lending machine
· Restructure the four reservable rooms at the BHPL into digital creative spaces for experiencing and learning new technologies for entertainment, creative expression and education, and collaborative learning. Upgrades to include new interior finishes incorporating interactive wall surfaces, adaptive furnishings, and advanced technology equipment (digital, sound, light) which necessitates sound dampening and enhanced electrical and data servicing.
· Install an electronic outdoor locker system for off hours and curbside pickup.
· Support increased Library usage of Memorial Park for outdoor programming by adding a sound system, Library signage, outdoor cooling system, additional sun control and storage for Library materials.

The Board of Trustees supports the use of Capital Reserves for this Extended Capital Plan which is rooted in the significant Reimagining of the BHPL. With the Reimagining, the BHPL will continue to adapt as needed, in order to accommodate other capital expenses and future reimagining plans.

BERKELEY HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY
TOWNSHIP OF BERKELEY HEIGHTS
UNION COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION AMENDING CAPITAL PLAN AND RESERVING ADDITIONAL FUNDS

WHEREAS, Berkeley Heights Public Library (BHPL) Board of Trustees (Board) has established a Capital Reserve Account to offset the cost of major repairs, infrastructure, and other capital expenses; and

WHEREAS, BHPL Board adopted a Capital Plan 2021-2023 on November 8, 2021 which is now substantially completed; and

WHEREAS, the BHPL Board has identified needed capital improvement projects more specifically set forth on the attached Capital Plan 2024-2029; and

WHEREAS, the BHPL Board has determined that the Capital Plan will contribute to the provision of efficient and effective library services to the public; and

WHEREAS, the BHPL Board has determined there will be a year-end surplus in the Operating Account.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Berkeley Heights Public Library, County of Union, State of New Jersey, hereby adopts the Extended Capital Plan 2024-2029 and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Berkeley Heights Public Library, County of Union, State of New Jersey, authorizes the transfer of $300,000.00 from the Operating Account to the Capital Reserve Account.

President, Ann Bunyaner	Secretary, Donna Boyd

Meeting Date: December 9, 2024

ROLL CALL:

Yeah

Nay