

FACT SHEET on the Ballard Branch of The Seattle Public Library

5614 22nd Ave. N.W., Seattle, WA 98107 • (206) 684-4089 • www.spl.org

History

After Ballard incorporated as a city, the Dewey Woman's Christian Temperance Union raised money to open a free reading room in 1901.

Ballard residents raised money and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie donated \$15,000 to build the Carnegie Free Public Library in 1904 on what is now Northwest Market Street. In 1907, when the city of Seattle annexed Ballard, the library became a branch of The Seattle Public Library.

In 1963, the cramped Carnegie branch was replaced with a new, 7,296-square-foot branch at 5711 24th Ave. N.W.

In 1998, voters approved the \$196.4 million "Libraries for All" bond measure and The Seattle Public Library Foundation pledged to contribute privately raised money to improve the library system. The plan included building a new 15,000-square-foot Ballard Branch.

The Library bought property at 22nd Avenue Northwest and Northwest 57th Street for the new branch. The city of Seattle also decided to locate a 3,100-square-foot Ballard Neighborhood Service Center in the same building.

Construction began in February 2004. The new branch and service center opened Saturday, May 14, 2005.

About the Architecture

- The roof sweeps north to bathe the interior with indirect light; a lower roof section provides an intimate scale for reading along the north wall.
- A covered porch area provides a civic face along the pedestrian corridor of 22nd Avenue Northwest.
- A "green roof" is planted with more than 18,000 low-water-use plants. A periscope inside the branch gives people a view of the roof and the Olympic Mountains.
- Artists Donald Fels, Andrew Schloss and Dale Stammen created the building's computer-generated artwork, which uses data from scientific devices on the roof that measure sunlight, the sound of rain, and wind speed and direction.
- A complex computer program interprets the data and responds to climactic changes by triggering patterns of motion on LED (light-emitting diode) displays, as well as combinations of sounds.
- The Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs manages the Library's public art program.

About the Branch

The new \$10.9 million branch is the 15th project completed under the LFA building program. It has an updated collection and the capacity to hold 66,700 books and materials.

Highlights include materials related to the local maritime and fishing industry, and a world languages collection that contains books, tapes, newspapers and magazines in languages other than English.

The new branch has self-checkout stations, 38 computers (up from 13), underground parking, a special area for teens, and a meeting room. The children's area in the prominent northwest corner overlooks the future municipal park space.

Two study rooms provide space for tutoring and other uses, and a small conference room can host limited meetings. A quiet room is an alternative to the activity of the main reading room.

Architect: Bohlin Cywinski Jackson

Contractor: PCL Construction Services Inc.

Artists: Donald Fels, Andrew Schloss, Dale Stammen



The Seattle Public Library



The new Ballard Branch and Neighborhood Service Center.