FAQs

(Frequently Asked Questions)

HISTORIC HAMILTON TOWN HALL REUSE

LIBRARY EXPANSION

How You Can Help

LIBRARY FUNDRAISING BEGINS NOW

The Bitterroot Public Library Foundation will lead on library expansion fundraising. The BPL foundation has been raising funds for large, library infrastructure since 1989.

BPL FOUNDATION DONATION LINK HERE

OR MAIL A CHECK TO:

BITTERROOT PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION
306 State St.
Hamilton, Mt 59840

CONTACT:

BITTERROOT PUBLIC LIBRARY

Phone
406.363.1670

Email
director@bitterrootpubliclibrary.org

CITY OF HAMILTON

Phone
406.363.2101

Email
mrohrbach@cityofhamilton.net

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Historic Hamilton Town Hall
Montana State Historic Preservation Office, unidentified photographer, date taken unknown

A conceptual rendering of the historic town hall renovation and library expansion from the Preliminary Architecture Report.

FAQs

The Library expansion explained

WHY ARE WE EXPANDING?

We need to be bigger. Libraries serving our population size are normally twice as big. BPL conducted a Facility Needs Assessment (available on our website) that included a community survey asking if, where, and how the library needs to or should expand. The response was overwhelmingly positive for expanding into the historic town hall next door.

WHERE ARE WE EXPANDING TO?

The Library will expand to the east over the alley and where the one-story garage bays are currently located. City Hall will move into the Historic Town Hall building.

WHY ARE WE PARTNERING WITH THE CITY?

When the Hamilton Fire Department moved to their new station in 2023, the City and Library partnered on a preliminary architectural report (PAR) to assess feasible re-use options for the Historic Town Hall. After substantial public input and analysis, the preferred alternative identified in the PAR was for a City Hall-Library colocation on the site.

WHEN WILL THE EXPANSION BEGIN?

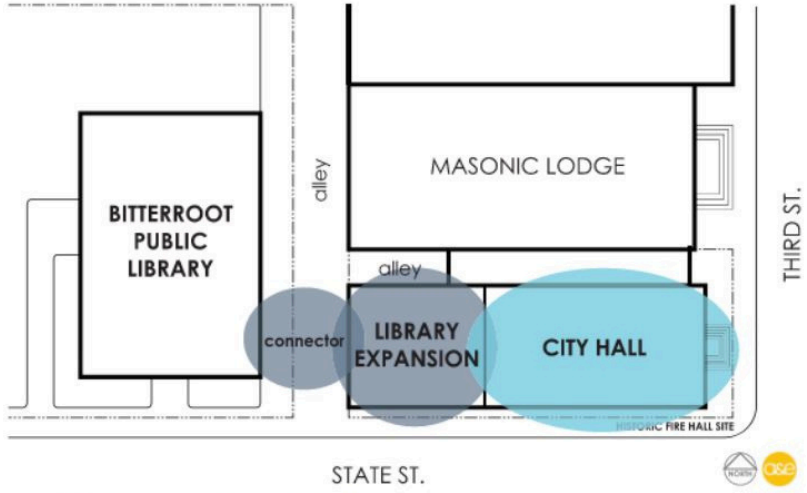
In June, 2025, the City Council approved the expansion plans moving forward. With this approval, the library can now officially get started on this project. Once additional architectural plans and a phasing schedule are completed we will have more specific information about construction timelines.

HOW MUCH WILL THE LIBRARY EXPANSION COST?

The PAR estimates the cost (in 2024 dollars) of the City Hall-Library colocation project at $21.5 million. The cost will be split between the Library and the City, with the exact split to be determined after development of detailed architectural and engineering plans and a phasing schedule.

HOW WILL THE EXPANSION BE PAID FOR?

The Bitterroot Public Library Foundation is preparing for a multi-year fundraising campaign to fund the library expansion with private donations. Grants for historic preservation and public facilities will also be pursued.



Concept Plan of Option 1 – City Hall + Library, Preferred Alternative (A&E Design).

HOW BIG WILL THE LIBRARY BE AFTER EXPANSION?

This expansion will add 12,000 sq. ft. to our current library building. This will almost double the size of the library.

NEXT STEPS

This project is a joint collaboration between the Library and the City of Hamilton. Library and city staff will work together to choose an architectural firm and begin working with them to create necessary planning and phasing documents.

MAGIC 8 BALL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Will there be more parking?
It is certain.

Will the library keep the green space and gazebo as part of the expansion?
It is decidedly so.

Will the library be closed during parts of the expansion?
Cannot predict now.

Will the children and youth areas be enlarged?
Without a doubt.

When will this project be completed?
Cannot predict now. Ask again later.