



Harrison Memorial Library Centennial Restoration Community Workshop 3

Monday, November 10, 2025 from 5 pm to 6:30 pm

Location: Carpenter Hall at Sunset Center, Carmel

COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY

December 4, 2025

moore ruble yudell
architects & planners

Executive Summary

On November 10, 2025, Carmel-by-the-Sea's dedicated library community gathered for the third time to hear about the evolution of the Harrison Memorial Library project and share their thoughts in a highly participatory community focused workshop. The workshop was hosted by the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea, the Carmel Public Library, and the Carmel Public Library Foundation, to provide critical input for the library's Centennial Restoration Project. The project is being funded by donors through a Carmel Public Library Foundation capital campaign. It will provide much needed improvements to the historic building, enabling the library to continue its vital role as a center for the community for the next 100-years.

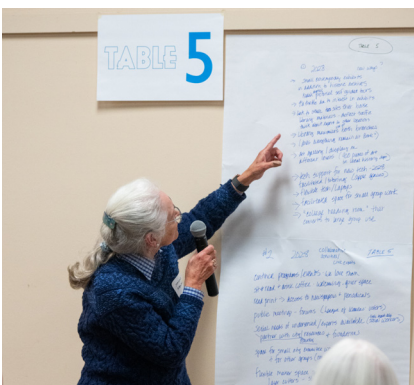
The goal of the workshop was to keep the community informed on the progress of the project and solicit input on the evolution of the proposed conceptual approach to the project.

The workshop began with a summary of key themes and ideas that emerged from the prior workshops,

- the importance of the library's historic charm and character,
- the need for an accessible, inclusive, and welcoming environment
- the critical nature of books and research as core to the library experience,
- the library as a community and cultural center,
- and the desire for flexibility to accommodate changing needs and new technology.

A review of the historic evaluation of the building highlighted key elements that define the character from the original 1928 design.

Concurrent technical evaluations outlined conceptual approaches to address the building's accessibility challenges, improve seismic safety, and provide a more resilient and energy efficient building within the framework of the historic structure.



Executive Summary (cont'd)

A refined approach to the development of the restoration was shared with the workshop participants. This conceptual approach was developed to balance the preservation of the library's historic charm and the evolving needs for the future of libraries within an achievable budget and timeline. It incorporated critical input from library staff, patrons, the city, and library foundation, with aspirations and ideas shared by the broader community, including.

- restore the original character,
- celebrate books while increasing types of seating and gathering,
- preserve the feel of the library with in-wall shelving,
- provide flexible and reconfigurable spaces,
- integrate emerging technology,
- optimize outdoor space for library functions

Community input at the third workshop focused on imagining the newly restored library in 2028, after it has reopened. The community shared ideas on how they would use the library, along with the types of collaborative activities and events they would like to see at the library.

Key themes reinforced that the library's future lies in balancing tradition with innovation. By restoring historic elements, expanding technological capabilities, and deepening community engagement, the library will continue to thrive as a vital institution, not only as a repository of knowledge but as a living, breathing center of civic life.



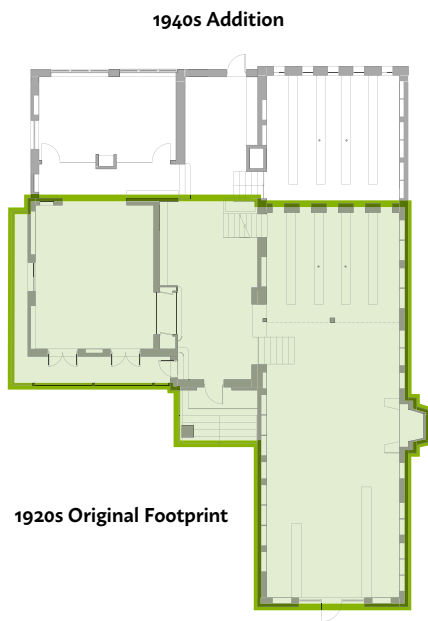
Project Principles

- Preserve the library's historic integrity and presence
- Plan the future of the library for Carmel
- Be a welcoming center for learning, community gathering, and social connection
- Enhance operational excellence and service to the community
- Support equitable and inclusive access to library services, programs, and resources
- Prioritize implementation within budget
- Incorporate sustainable and resilient design
- Elevate the poetry of experience



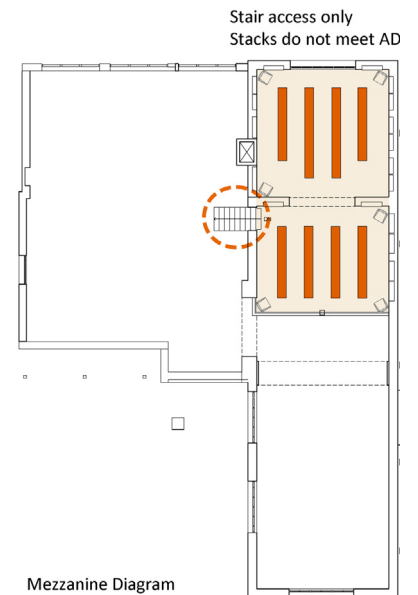
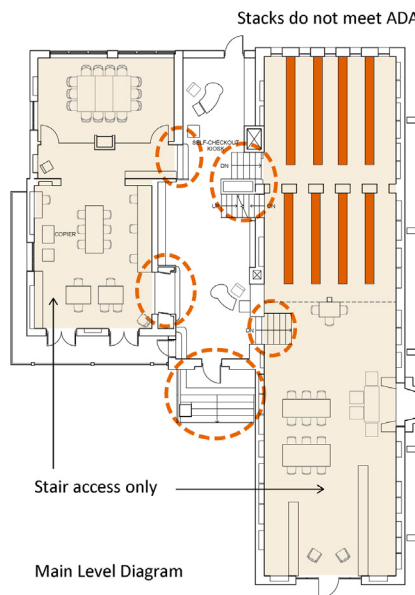
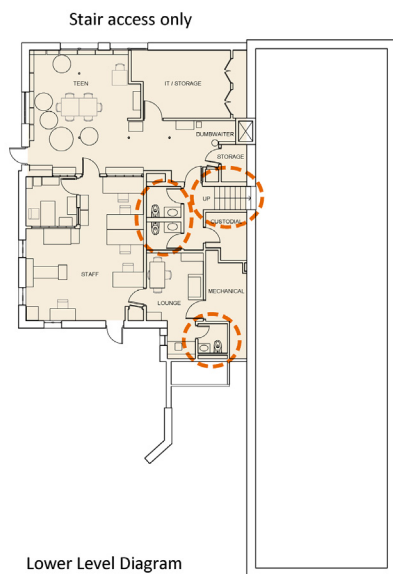
Building Evaluation

Historic Evaluation



- Original 1928 Building
- Wood Ceiling and Beams
- Plaster Walls and Arches
- Arched Windows
- Decorative Metal Work
- In-Wall Bookshelves
- Fireplace

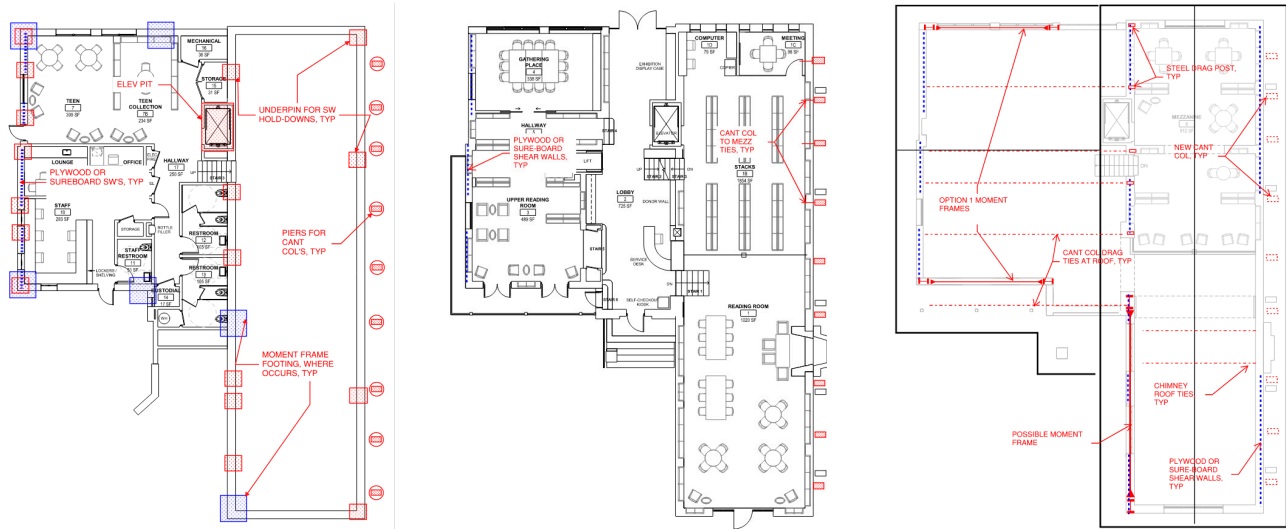
Accessibility Evaluation



Building Evaluation

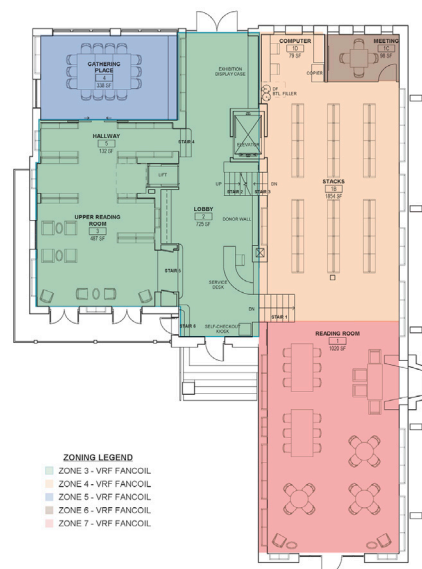
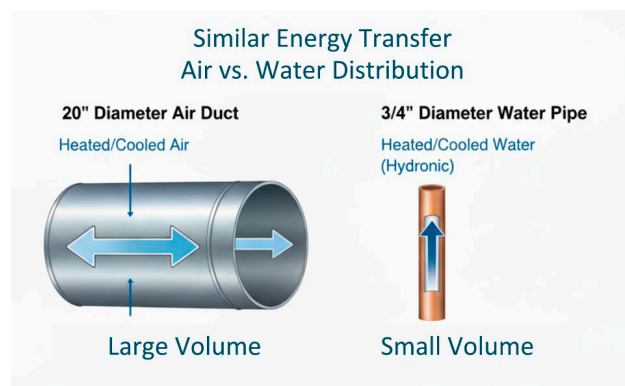
Structural Evaluation

- Reinforce foundations
- Increase shear resistance
- Strengthen openings & roof structure

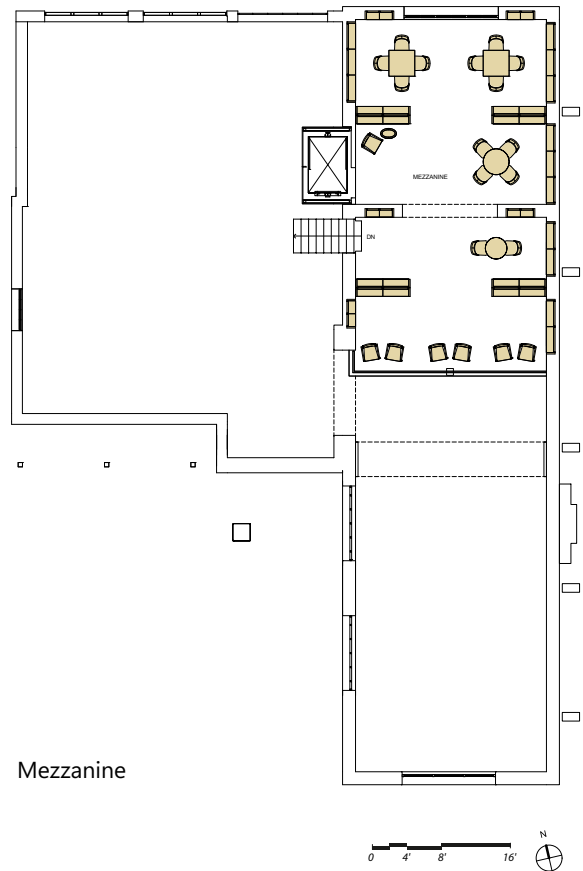
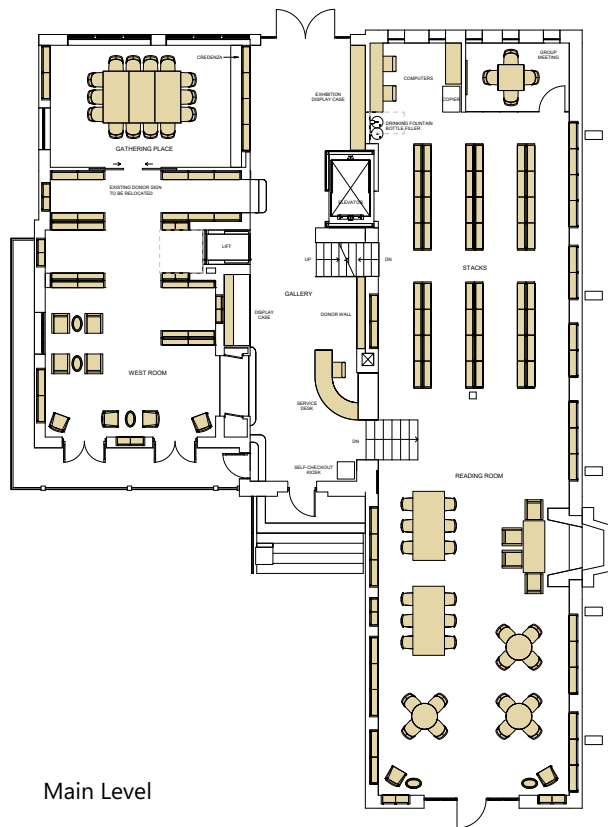


HVAC Evaluation

- Modern code requirements
- Limited space (ceilings, historic)
- Heat Pump or Radiant system



Group Activity - Imagine 2028 and beyond



Key Opportunities

- Restore historic character
- Welcoming entries & gallery
- Optimized & accessible shelving
- Seating for reading, working, or studying
- Reconfigurable furniture for flexibility
- Small to medium size meeting rooms with enhanced technology
- Restore north daylighting
- Special north facing reading area
- Flexible event seating at balcony

What We Heard - Key Themes

Preservation & Restoration

Honor historic building elements. Celebrate local history while showcasing contemporary community culture

Innovation & Technology

Expand technical education and services with flexibility to incorporate space for technology focused activities

Flexible & Welcoming Spaces

Serve a broad range of reading, reflection, activities, and social interaction, in a welcoming and engaging environment

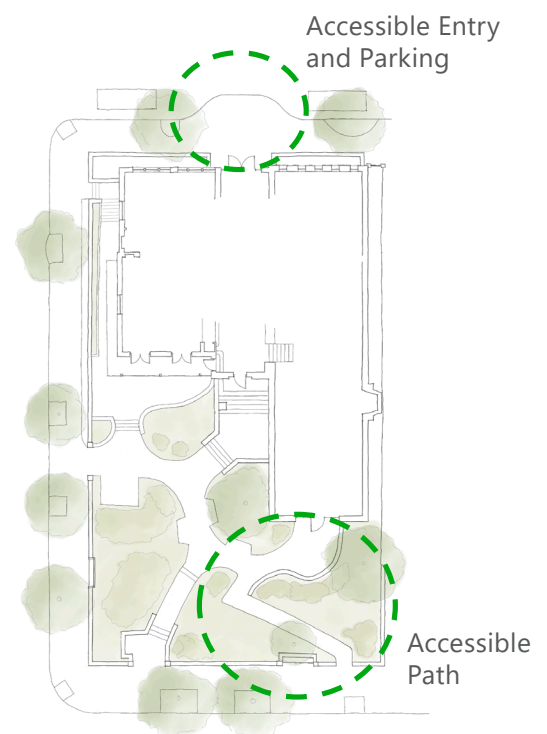
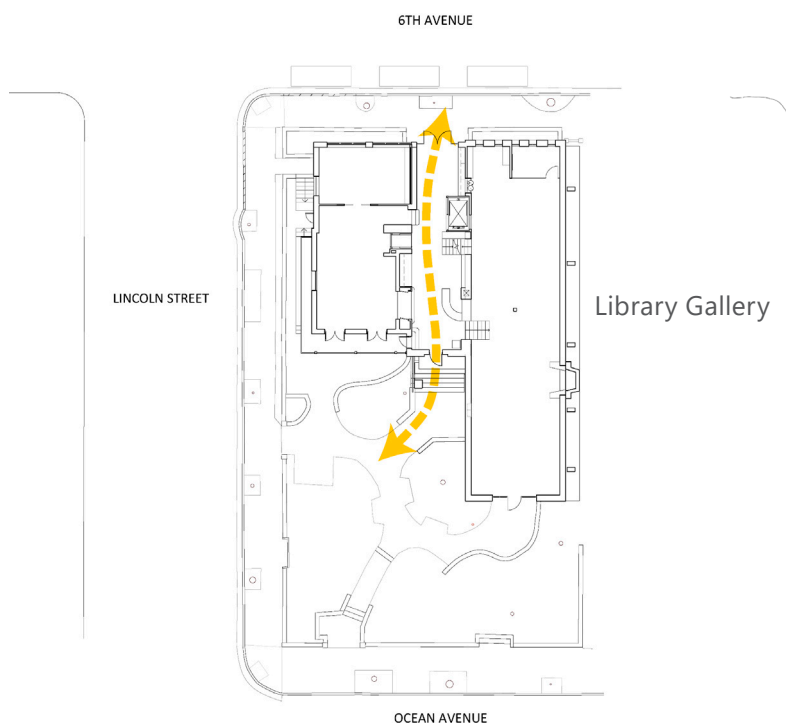
Community Engagement & Programs

Continue and expand excellent programs in music, poetry, and author talks, while exploring opportunities for additional civic forums and outreach

Cultural & Social Value

Celebrate and evolve role as both a cultural landmark and vital community resource

Potential Site Opportunity



Acknowledgments

We wish to convey our thanks and appreciation to all the workshop participants, and extend special thanks to the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea, the Sunset Center, the Carmel Public Library, and the Carmel Public Library Foundation for their support and efforts to make this essential community workshop possible.

City of Carmel-by-the-Sea

Dale Byrne, Mayor
Bob Delves, Mayor Pro Tem
Brandon Swanson, Assistant City Administrator

Harrison Memorial Library

Melinda Cervantes, Interim Library Director
Mary Jo Williams, Library Board of Trustees President
Renee Martine

Carmel Public Library Foundation

Marci Meaux, President
Alexandra Fallon, CEO
Anita Mitchell, Development Associate
Nancy Middleton, Programs Manager
Steve Aitchison, Project Representative
Ilana Bofford Entin, Communications Manager
Jimenez Photography

