
NEWS RELEASE



April 20, 2022

Contact: [Mary Getchell](#), Marketing and Communications Director
Office: 253-548-3428; cell: 253-229-4477

Help plan the future for Lakewood and Tillicum Pierce County Libraries

PIERCE COUNTY, Washington – The Pierce County Library System and the City of Lakewood are forming a community advisory committee to help determine how the Library System can provide quality services in a safe, welcoming space for Lakewood and Tillicum residents. The Library System and City are taking [applications](#) for the volunteer committee **now through April 30, 2022**.

“The Lakewood and Tillicum Libraries are well-loved and well-used buildings, and unfortunately they no longer serve the community well,” said Pierce County Library Executive Director Georgia Lomax. “At this point, costs to repair and maintain the buildings far outweigh the value of the properties. We are committed to providing quality library services for Lakewood residents.”

The committee, made up of community leaders and volunteers, will review public input about Lakewood and Tillicum Pierce County Libraries from 2019, study the significant building needs, and provide advice to the Library System about how it could best provide library services for Lakewood.

Through the years, the Library System has taken many steps to repair and maintain the aging buildings, which are both now in critical condition.

Recently architects assessed the 59-year-old Lakewood Library and determined rough estimates for the building requires \$10-\$15 million in repairs for improved safety and access, including replacing the roof and damage throughout the building from the leaky roof, replacing the elevator, heating and cooling system, and plumbing system, and upgrading windows and doors. This estimate includes urgent needs and long-term investments.

In late 2021, building inspectors examined the now 38-year-old Tillicum Library, and they found significant amounts of water seeping into the building at both the roof and the siding. They also found dilapidated insulation, windows, doors and building systems. Overall, they concluded the building is in need of a substantial overhaul.

While the committee is working, the Library System will not invest further in the buildings and determined further costs for repairs far outweigh the value of the buildings. It is evaluating its options to serve the community best.

The Library System and City are very interested in the ideas and recommendations from the advisory committee.

In 2019, the Library System conducted extensive public engagement to learn the public’s interest in a new library for Lakewood and Tillicum. Overall, residents showed interest in new libraries.

NEWS RELEASE



April 20, 2022

Contact: [Mary Getchell](#), Marketing and Communications Director
Office: 253-548-3428; cell: 253-229-4477

In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Library System delayed further discussion with the community and determining next steps to best serve residents.

The community advisory committee would convene in June and is expected to provide the Library System with its recommendation in the fall.

People may apply to participate on the committee at imagine.pcls.us or pick up an application at Lakewood or Tillicum Libraries or Lakewood City Hall.

The nationally acclaimed [Pierce County Library System](#) serves 634,000 people throughout Pierce County with 20 libraries and online services. The system is the fourth largest in the state and property taxes are the main funding source. People may choose from more than one million books, e-books, audiobooks, movies and other materials. Pierce County Library is committed to directing services in three primary areas: learning, enjoyment and community connection. Its services and programs spark success for Pierce County residents. More than 2 million people visit Pierce County Libraries each year. The Library provides services and programs directly to people in adult care facilities, people who are homebound, and to children in childcare centers and schools. [Pierce County Libraries are located](#) at Anderson Island, Bonney Lake, Buckley, DuPont, Eatonville, Fife, Gig Harbor, Graham, Key Center, Lakewood, Milton/Edgewood, Orting, Parkland/Spanaway, Pierce County Library Administrative Center, South Hill, Steilacoom, Summit, Sumner, Tillicum and University Place. Pierce County Library is an independent municipal corporation and operates as a junior taxing district.

piercecountylibrary.org

facebook.com/PierceCoLibrary

twitter.com/PierceCoLibrary