

LIBRARY TASK FORCE

Frequently Asked Questions



What is the Library Task Force?

Mayor John Huffman has asked Councilmembers Kathy Talley and Ronell Smith to lead a group of citizens through a process to:

Review options and make recommendations to the Southlake Library Board and the City Council for the ultimate Southlake Public Library location.

Consider and advise City Council and appropriate boards and commissions on complimentary municipal uses to enhance the customer experience at the facility.

Use City master plans and technical studies as a guide to suggest facility characteristics and service offerings for a new library and other recommended facilities and programs.

Why has the Task Force been put into place?

The City has studied the community's library needs, and there have been many concepts considered by the City Council over the years, including the idea to build a library in the proposed Carillon commercial development. Mayor Huffman and the current Council are interested in engaging the community in a conversation to make final plans. With the help of the Task Force, Council will be able to determine the best way to move forward so the project can be completed.

Who will serve on the Task Force?

The Task Force will operate under the leadership of Councilmembers Kathy Talley and Ronell Smith. Community members representing various groups will join Council representatives as part of the team. For example, the group will include members of the Southlake Library Board and the Southlake Arts Council, the Southlake Foundation, Southlake Women's Club, Southlake Chamber of Commerce, and other community groups. The group will also include youth representatives and a representative for Southlake's special needs population.

Will the public have opportunities to provide input?

Absolutely. The Task Force will host Town Hall style meetings to keep the public informed and solicit feedback and input. Additionally, Task Force work will be reported on the City of Southlake's website and social media channels.

What is the time frame for the Task Force's work?

The Task Force will work diligently to study and address key issues through spring 2022. The first order of business will be researching location options and developing a recommendation on the ultimate site for the Library Board and City Council to consider. The goal is to complete final recommendations for the City Council by early summer.



What planning has the City done to prepare for a new library?

The Southlake 2030 Parks, Recreation & Open Space / Community Facilities Master Plan includes provisions for a public library. In addition, two specific library studies have been completed. The first was prepared in 2016, then updated in 2021. These studies examined library trends, customer preferences (through surveys), and identified future library goals.

These plans are great resources, providing an excellent starting point for the Task Force work.

What considerations will go into decisions about the library's offerings?

The Task Force will review master plan and other study data, carefully considering industry trends and local survey results. Financial considerations will also be reviewed. Finally, the community input obtained through the process will be a significant part of the decision-making process.

If a new library is pursued, how might the City pay for it?

Where possible, grants, sponsorships, and foundation funding will be obtained to offset the cost of a new library. Additionally, Southlake's Chief Financial Officer will develop a financial plan identifying available revenue for the project. This could include tax funds, revenue from local, voter-approved sales tax districts, etc. Ultimately, the financial plan will consider the facility and match appropriate revenue to the planned uses.

The City has long planned for an expanded library, and long-term financial projections contemplate associated capital and operational costs.

Will the City need to raise taxes to build the library?

No. The plans for the library are being developed with an understanding that additional taxes will not be required to fund its construction.

Are other uses being considered along with the library?

Yes. Very often library facilities are co-located with other municipal or cultural amenities. It is possible that an expanded library would include performing arts offerings or be located close to a park. The Task Force will explore ideas, guided by community preferences and ideas gleaned from a study of other libraries.

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