



Q & A

A New Nanaimo Wellington Library

1. Why a new Nanaimo Wellington Library?

- Since its establishment in 1979, the community of central Nanaimo has made excellent use of its small library on 3032 Barons Road. This popular branch of Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL), serves a growing population of approximately 20,900 people. Reflecting the community's passion for library services it provides, the small branch boasts a total visitor count of 123,676 people in 2015 alone.
- With the branch requiring maintenance (in part due to its age), the Nanaimo Wellington branch ranked high on the priority list for improvement, according to the Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) Board of Trustees [Facilities Master Plan](#). This facilities plan was approved by the Board in 2010, which is a plan to allocate funds to those branches in greatest need of repair or replacement for all of VIRL's 39 branches.
- Since that time, VIRL has worked to find opportunities for a new facility that could fix the deferred maintenance issues while providing even better library services for the community it serves.
- VIRL and the nearby community participated in a community consultation session in 2015, as a part of VIRL's five-year Strategic Plan to understand and capture the needs and wants from the community. The community spoke directly to what they envisioned their new library should be, today and for tomorrow, for their community and their families.

2. Could the current facility be renovated?

- The existing branch at 3032 Barons Road, Nanaimo, hasn't received any updates in almost two decades, which presented a costly renovation option for VIRL if decided to bring the facility to a minimum level of service and comfort.
- VIRL released an Expression of Interest in 2015 to other possible options in the vicinity. The winning submission met budget, provided necessary space, was within the immediate service area with access to a major transit hub, and provided flexible hours and the greatest accessibility (i.e. access for people with disabilities and outdoor book drop).



3. Why Country Club Centre?

- The current Nanaimo Wellington library branch, located at 3032 Barons Road, is preparing a move to a purpose-built and newly renovated facility at the nearby Country Club Centre.
- The new location lends the Nanaimo Wellington branch improved exposure and customer traffic, and better parking. VIRL currently leases the space for the Wellington library branch on Barons Road, which expires at the end of March, 2017.
- The Country Club Centre is a destination for families, seniors and the immediate and surrounding neighbourhoods of central Nanaimo and presents an ideal space for staff and customers in what will be a greater, purpose-built space tailored for the surrounding community.

4. How will library services expand in a new facility? Will there be more books, CDs, DVDs etc. for the public to browse in the new library?

- A new, purpose-built facility will provide new space and room to tailor the library collection to the community – including the addition of brand new books, magazines, newspapers, DVD's, CDs.
- New, public computers with Internet access, word processing and other software. There will also be special computer stations for children with educational, fun-filled software that promotes literary.
- Increased public space with comfortable lounge seating for reading, quiet study areas, collaborative spaces, and areas for children's programs.

5. Is there a concept plan for the building and the site?

- VIRL is excited to share some of the plans and ideas for the new library space at an upcoming public consultation session at 3032 Barons Road on Thursday, April 14th (6:30pm – 7:30pm). Here VIRL staff hope to gain more feedback from the community, as plans are underway, to make sure that the new space meets the community's needs.

6. What is the projected opening date for the new building?

- More information will be available when construction begins, however plans are to open the new branch in late 2016 or early 2017. The lease on the current facility on 3032 Barons Road expires March 31, 2017.



7. How will this affect customers?

- Since the current facility will not be renovated, the library can retain virtually all services at the current Nanaimo Wellington branch until the new branch is opened in 2017 (date to be announced soon after construction begins). Up until the opening of the new facility in 2017, the Wellington branch will continue to provide holds pickup and drop off service, catalogue and public computer access, as well as Library staff support.

8. What's next?

- The community is invited to participate in a public consultation session (and open house) on Thursday, April 14th (6:30pm – 7:30pm). VIRL hopes to gain feedback and answer questions, as well as provide info on some of the newest features that the new branch will offer. Architectural plans and initial designs will be presented and an open Q&A will be made available.

9. When will I know more?

- More information will follow as a construction timeline is developed. Wellington branch staff will be working closely with customers to ensure that customers are fully supported during this transition.

Questions?

Please visit virl.bc.ca or ask a staff member at the Nanaimo Wellington Branch.