



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Thursday, October 26, 2023

Contact: Mayor's Press Office, [mayorspressoffice@sfgov.org](mailto:mayorspressoffice@sfgov.org)

**\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

**SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY RECEIVES \$6.3  
MILLION GRANT FOR MAIN LIBRARY RENOVATIONS**

*The grant will help fund critical seismic repairs and upgrades to preserve over 1 million items of the Main Library's collection and ensure the building is safe for generations to come*

**San Francisco, CA** - San Francisco Public Library (SFPL) has been awarded a \$6.3 million Building Forward grant from the California State Library to help fund critical repairs and upgrades to the Main Library's seismic moat and roof. The grant addresses the deteriorating conditions of these essential components, ensuring the safety and preservation of the Library's valuable collections and improving building access for patrons and staff.

"Our Main Library is a vital resource for the community," said **Mayor London N. Breed**. "The Building Forward grant guarantees the Main Library's seismic moat and roof are brought up to modern standards, ensuring that the Library remains a safe and welcoming space for all."

Completed in 1996, the Main Library's roof and seismic moat have exceeded their serviceable lives. The seismic moat allows the building to move side to side, thereby protecting it from the full force and jolt of an earthquake and preserving access to the building after the event. The Library engaged San Francisco Public Works to collaborate with the original manufacturer of the moat system to design a method for its replacement that will increase the survivability of the entrance paths after an earthquake. To support the roof replacement and moat repair, SFPL will match the grant by allocating monies from the Library Preservation Fund over several fiscal years through the City's annual budget process.

"I want to thank the California State Library for awarding us this grant," stated **City Librarian Michael Lambert**. "Our Main Library is the heart of our library system, serving roughly 15,000 people per week. We are committed to maintaining and improving our facilities to better serve the community, so that we can continue our mission of providing free access to knowledge, resources and programs that empower individuals to thrive."

"The Main Library stands as a treasured institution that houses an amazing trove of information and serves as a community hub," said **interim Public Works Director Carla Short**. "With San Francisco's strong and longstanding dedication to bolstering the seismic resiliency of our civic structures, this grant will help us maintain our earthquake safety standards for the Main."



The Main Library is a significant landmark in San Francisco's Civic Center. Designed by James Ingo Freed of Pei Cobb Freed & Partners (New York) and Cathy Simon of Simon Martin-Vegue Winkelstein & Morris (San Francisco), the 376,000-foot facility offers twice as much usable space as its predecessor, which is now home to the Asian Art Museum.

The building construction was made possible with \$104.5 million in bond funds and \$22 million in private donations—the largest public/private partnership in the City's history at the time. The Main Library has more than 1.2 million items in its collection and is home to the San Francisco History Center, the City's official archive; Book Arts & Special Collections; the Government Information Center, the official depository of all City Government documents and the James C. Hormel LGBTQIA+ Center, encompassing the nation's first research collection of gay and lesbian materials.

To learn more about the San Francisco Public Library, visit [sfpl.org](http://sfpl.org).

###