

DRAFT

Board of Library Trustees Handbook

(Updated April 2026)



Santa Clara
CITY LIBRARY



**City of
Santa Clara**
The Center of What's Possible

Introduction to the Board of Library Trustees

The Board of Library Trustees (Board) is primarily responsible for the establishment, acceptance, and continued supervision of the public library program.

The Charter of the City of Santa Clara prescribes several specific responsibilities of the Board. The Board

- a) Makes and enforces, subject to Council approval and Library staff support, by-laws and rules and regulations for the administration of the public library;
- b) Approves or disapproves the appointment of the City Librarian;
- c) Accepts donations into the library fund (subject to the approval of the City Council); and
- d) Contracts with other governmental agencies to render or receive library services (also subject to the approval of the City Council)

Charter, City of Santa Clara, Sec. 1012 and 1013. <https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SantaClara/html/SantaClaraCH.html#1012>

**Subject to change, City of Santa Clara Charter currently in revision*

Function of the Board of Library Trustees

The Board of Library Trustees is an advisory body, meaning that its function is primarily to provide advice and recommendations to Library staff and the City Council regarding Library services. The City Librarian is responsible for day-to-day management of the Library system and its staff. The interface between City staff and the Board is solely through the City Librarian. Although Board members are likely to meet other members of Library staff, in no sense do Board members provide direction to Library staff.

The Board of Library Trustees are appointed for four-year terms by City Council. Trustees may be reappointed for a second term.

Responsibilities of the Board of Library Trustees

The Board performs its duties in public meetings. Although the Board annually determines the precise time and location for its meetings for the following calendar year, in general the Board meets on the 1st Monday of the month at 6:00 pm and generally at the Central Park Library Edinger Room at 2635 Homestead Road. Some meetings may be held at the Northside Library or Mission Library.

Special meetings can also be called as necessary under special circumstances in coordination with City staff.

The Board recommends an annual calendar of meetings and an annual Workplan for City Council approval. The Board can also form subcommittees consisting of less than a quorum of the Board to perform designated tasks.

Expectations of the Board of Library Trustees

The Board and Library staff have identified the following common expectations of Board of Library Trustee members (subject to City staff review):

- Attend regularly scheduled meetings and special meetings if needed
- Maintain and monitor Annual Work Plan and if needed, add items to it
- Advocate for the Library system, focusing primarily on local Santa Clara issues, but also for state and national library issues
- Represent the Library system in interactions with the public by accepting (and reporting) feedback from residents and providing information on Library operations
- Respond to City Council and City Librarian requests
- Approve grants and donations to the Library
- Serve on Ad Hoc subcommittees as needed
- Advise and engage in the development of the Library Strategic Plan and other plans and to support their implementation
- Establish and approve Library policy, subject to Council oversight
- Provide a liaison (one Board member) to the Santa Clara City Library Foundation and Friends (SCCLFF)
- Recruit potential Board member applicants to ensure an applicant pool reflective of Santa Clara's diversity and user base
- Be familiar and comply with the Brown Act and the ethical obligations imposed by state and City codes

Priorities of the Board of Library Trustees

- Development of and action on Annual Workplan
- Coordination with the Santa Clara City Library Foundation and Friends to support Foundation fundraising initiatives
- Coordination with City Council to raise awareness of the Library
- Approval of Santa Clara City Library policies
- Support of Santa Clara City Library events and programs
- Share community perspectives with Santa Clara City Library leadership

Opportunities to Support the Library

In addition, there are many opportunities as a Board member to support the Library system:

- Engage with City Council to raise awareness of the importance of Library programs and services
- Provide input and feedback on planning efforts such as Strategic Plans or Facilities Master Plans
- Attend library programs
- Participate in professional development and training opportunities, e.g., conferences, workshops and training sessions focusing on Trustee and Library work
- Encourage the Santa Clara City Library Foundation and Friends Board to become actively involved in raising money to support future revenue measures and/or larger donations from community donors
- Participate to the extent possible in Santa Clara City Library Foundation and Friends fundraisers (e.g., end of year appeal, Annual Gala)

Training Opportunities

There are many training opportunities which members of the Board of Library Trustees may consider. These include:

- Serving with a Purpose - <https://www.servingwithapurposeca.org/>
- California Library Association (CLA) annual conference - <https://www.cla-net.org/>
- California Public Library Advocates (CPLA) meetings and programs - <https://cpladvocates.org/>
- United for Libraries Board/Trustee/Commission/Friends training - <https://www.ala.org/united/trustees>
- Future of Libraries Conference - <https://www.plpinfo.org/staffdevelopment/the-future-of-libraries/>
- Public Library Association (PLA) bi-annual conference, division meetings and programs - <https://www.ala.org/pla/>
- Pacific Library Partnership (PLP) programs - <https://www.plpinfo.org/>
- American Library Association (ALA) annual conference - <https://www.ala.org/conferencesevents/>
- Library Juice Academy online courses - <https://libraryjuiceacademy.com/>
- InfoPeople online training - <https://infopeople.org/training/view/online>



Library Shelf for Trustees

There are digital and print library resources available to Trustees for deeper insight into library services and professional efforts and innovations nationwide:

Digital

(No login required) American Libraries: <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/magazine/issues/>
(SCCL library card required) Booklist Reader: <https://ncdl.overdrive.com/ncdl-santaclaracity/content/media/13003123>

Physical

Library Journal: Library has physical copies that BOLT can borrow on request, or that can be brought to the monthly Board meetings.

Volunteer Opportunities

There are many volunteer opportunities which members of the Board of Library Trustees may consider. These include:

- Read Santa Clara (training provided)
 - Volunteer Tutor for Adult Literacy
 - English as a Second Language Tutor
- Adult Services
 - English as a Second Language Book Club
 - English as a Second Language Conversation Club
- Santa Clara City Library Foundation and Friends

About the Library

History

- 1850's: Earliest regional Library in the office of Justice of the Peace Dick Jones
- 1870: Santa Clara Library Association formed
 - Library located at Odd Fellows Hall on Washington St. & Franklin St.
 - Over 300 volumes
- 1879: Christian Temperance Free Reading Room open
 - Located in "M.E." Church basement
 - Nov 1879 moved to Liberty & Main
 - Closed 1895
- 1895: Shakespeare Club members formed Santa Clara Book Club
 - Collection moved to Women's Christian Temperance Union Reading Room at the Grove Building, 909 Main St.
- 1903: Town Library established by the Board of Town Trustees
 - First located in two rooms in the Franck Building
- 1914: Library moved to 2nd floor City Hall on Franklin & Washington
- 1927: Charter established Board of Library Trustees
- 1953: First City Librarian hired, Frances Klune
- 1955: Library built at current location of Mission Branch, in City Plaza at Main & Lexington
- 1960: First Bookmobile purchased
- 1967: First Central Library built, architect Edward Durrell Stone
- 1980: Central Library renovated and expanded, architect Len Watson
 - Closed 2001, moved to temporary location 3345 Lochinvar Ave
- 2004: New Central Park Library Dedicated
- 2014: Northside Branch Library opened



About the Library

Current Facilities

Central Park Library

2635 Homestead Rd, Santa Clara, CA 95051

80,000+ sq.ft. public space, total ~ 146,000 sq.ft.

Current Building Opened 4/19/2004, Architect Group 4, Contractor SJ Amoroso

Northside Branch Library

695 Moreland Way, Santa Clara, CA 95054

17,000+ sq.ft.

Opened 8/9/2014, Architect Steinberg Hart, Contractor Bogard Construction

Mission Branch Library

1098 Lexington St., Santa Clara, CA 95050

7,900+ sq.ft.

Originally built 1955, Architect Noll & Tam, Contractor Higgins and Root

Renovation 2000, Renovation and Expansion 9/9/2018

About the Library

The Santa Clara City Library consists of

- 1 Main Library
- 2 Branch Libraries
- 1 Bookmobile
- 1 Virtual Branch (website)

Recent Statistics

In FY 2024-25

- Items in the Library's collection circulated 1,863,357 times (checkouts and renewals)
 - 1,593,178 circulation of physical items
 - 270,179 circulation of e-resources
- Our collection contained 409,687 items, valued at \$28,358,535
 - 316,800 at Central Park Library
 - 62,113 at Northside Branch
 - 22,062 at Mission Branch
 - 8,712 on Bookmobile
- Patrons visited the Library 753,139 times
 - 463,368 at Central Park Library
 - 88,492 at Mission Branch
 - 181,356 at Northside Branch
 - 19,923 at Bookmobile



Library Services Beyond Books and Media

- RetroTech (digitization of older media)
- Tech Center (computer resources and assistance)
- Book clubs
- ESL programs for English language learning
- Seed exchange program
- SVP tools lending (Kill A Watt Electric Meter, Stud Locator, Multimeter)
- IT equipment (Chromebook and hotspot) lending
- Library of things (hiking poles, bear canisters. Park passes, GoPro 360 Camera, bike locks and tools, Fitbit)
- Storytime
- Summer Adventure
- Programs for all ages
- HomeBound Services
- Dial-a-Story
- STEAM Labs
- Homework Help Center (Elementary, Middle, and High School)
- Teen Internship/ Teen Volunteer Opportunities
- Bookmatch Readers Advisory Service
- Virtual Branch



Bookmobile

The Santa Clara City Library's Bookmobile meets the changing community needs and serves people where they live, learn, work and play.

Throughout the year, our Bookmobile provides services to neighborhoods, senior facilities, community events, and bustling live-shop-work developments in Santa Clara, including the City Hall Plaza. During the school year, the Bookmobile visits many preschools and Title 1 schools in the city and provides access to the library collection for students, families, and teachers.

The Bookmobile offers critical access to books and resources that promote early childhood literacy, enrich the lives of our seniors, and provides a gateway for low-income residents and new immigrants to a world of reading, learning and information. Bookmobile stops are designed to support access to senior, youth, and underserved populations, increasing access for Santa Clara residents across the city.



Comic Con

Comic Con developed out of the Santa Clara City Library’s STEM Innovation Bowl, or STEM Con, held before the 2016 Super Bowl in Santa Clara, hosting over 10,000 people and connecting fun, activity-oriented programs with technology and football.

This evolved into Comic Con at the Santa Clara City Library, modeled on other Comic Cons around the country, and focusing increasingly on comics and arts as an entry to the love of reading.

In 2024, the Santa Clara City Library hosted its 8th Comic Con, a highlight of local programming.

Comic Con draws crowds of many thousands to the library, for activities like crafts, photo booths and displays, artist panels, drawing panels, tabletop game panels, raffles, character story times and photos, cosplay and costume contests. Free comic books are given away in support of activities, all to encourage and support the love of reading.

Starting in 2024, Comic Con is scheduled to be held every other year, with the next one planned for October 10, 2026.

SANTA CLARA CITY LIBRARY 2026 COMIC CON

Goes **RETRO**

IT'S LIKE TOTALLY FREE

ARTISTS • GAMING
VENDORS • CRAFTS
COMICS • COSTUMES
CONTESTS • FOOD

WHERE THE **MISSION** MEETS THE MOMENT

THE SANTA CLARA CITY LIBRARY FOUNDATION AND FRIENDS

RSVP AT:

SCLIBRARY.ORG/COMIC-CON

CENTRAL PARK LIBRARY | 10-10-26 | 10AM-5PM

Read Santa Clara

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Mission: Read Santa Clara serves adults with limited literacy skills through 1:1 and small group tutoring, enabling them to achieve their goals as family members, workers, community members and lifelong learners. It is estimated that 1 in 6 adults lack basic literacy skills in Santa Clara County. Read Santa Clara is a part of the solution.

History: It began in 1995 as a branch of the Santa Clara County Reading Program serving the City of Santa Clara, and was housed at the Mission Branch Library. In 2000, recognizing the value of the literacy services, the City leadership decided to make Read Santa Clara an integral service of the Santa Clara City Library. The program is made possible by funding from the City of Santa Clara, from the California Library Literacy Services (for operations) and donations to the Library Foundation and Friends. Read Santa Clara operates with 2.5 FTE funded by the City of Santa Clara, as well as 4 As-Needed PT Grant-Funded Staff. Administration of Read Santa Clara is managed from Central Park Library.

Services include:

- Training for volunteers to tutor adults 1:1 and small groups to strengthen basic reading/writing skills
- Monthly family Literacy events for parents/caregivers with limited literacy skills at the library and at 6 state preschool classes (at 4 school sites)
- ESL small groups and 1:1 help for adults (referred by community partners and other library programs) who speak little or no English
- Technology assistance for adults with limited literacy skills
- Career Online High School, for adults who didn't complete high school, to earn a career certificate and get a high school diploma in 18 months
- A special Adult New Reader collection at all three library branches

Grants include:

- California Library Literacy Services Adult and Family Literacy Grant (\$111,897 in FY 24-25, and \$115,361 in FY 25-26) and ESL Grant (\$61,618 in FY 24-25, and \$64,709 in FY 25-26).

Outcomes include the following goals set and met by adult learners in FY 24-25:

- Read a book or a newspaper (87%)
- Share a book with a family member (84%)
- Access community resources (79%)
- Get a job or a better job (73%)
- Understand health information (63%)
- Learn basic tech skills (50%)
- 178 of 201 Read Santa Clara learners met a literacy goal.

Foundation and Friends

The Santa Clara City Library Foundation and Friends (SCCLFF) (<https://lovethelibrary.org/>), is a non-profit organization dedicated to supplementing public funding to expand and enhance the Library's programs and services.

SCCLFF actively seeks gifts, donations, grants, and bequests, as well as raising funds through year-round book sales. The Santa Clara City Library Foundation and Friends has a memorandum of understanding with the City of Santa Clara to support its mission.

Mission: The Santa Clara City Library Foundation & Friends strengthens the Library as a pillar of our diverse and thriving community through philanthropic funding and active partnership.

Vision: Enriching lives through lifelong learning.

Priorities:

- 1) Fundraising and Fund Management Manage and grow revenues through current revenue streams, new funding sources, and policy changes
- 2) Board Excellence and Engagement Provide a rewarding volunteer experience
- 3) Organizational Excellence Develop and implement effective organizational plans
- 4) Community Awareness of the Foundation Cultivate deeper engagement and strong alignment with Partners and City's Leaders, Staff, and Council
- 5) Partners, Stakeholders, and City Leadership Engagement

A Little more about SCCLFF:

- The Foundation and Friends support the Library by funding programs, materials, and major efforts such as Comic Con and Summer Adventure. SCCLFF serves as a fiscal agent for grants, and operates the Friends Bookstore, both at Library facilities and online. The Board of SCCLFF includes a non-voting representative serving as a liaison from the Library Board of Trustees.