

Fitchburg library temporary location open



The Fitchburg Public Library's temporary location at 166 Boulder Drive is providing library services and programs throughout the \$40 million renovation and expansion project of the library's Main Street building, which is expected to be completed summer 2025. DANIELLE RAY — SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE



PARENTS/CAREGIVERS
Please help keep
the Children's Room clean
Encourage your child to play on
the carpet after playing with toys

Don't Forget
Sandwiches
Sandwich Making Set



The Fitchburg Public Library temporary location at 166 Boulder Drive offers information and reference services, public computers, Wi-Fi, hotspots, printing, copying, faxing, meeting spaces for the public, story times, programming, museum passes, and more during the transition.

Pictured here is the play area in the children's room. DANIELLE RAY — SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE

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FITCHBURG >> The library opened a temporary location at 166 Boulder Dr. late last year to provide library services and programs throughout the renovation and expansion project of the library's Main Street building.

“We have enjoyed welcoming so many members of the community at 166 Boulder Drive as the work to renovate and expand our main location on Main Street begins,” said Fitchburg Public Library Executive Director Deb Hinkle in a press release. “Many thanks to the team at the Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority for the opportunity to call Boulder Drive our new temporary home and for their warm welcome.”

Hinkle shared that while 50% of their circulation materials are currently in storage, library patrons still have a plethora of adult, teen, and children's books, magazines, CDs, DVDs, and more to choose from. The large rooms at the spacious temporary location are filled with materials sorted by categories such as fiction, non-fiction, picture books, young adult, and reference books.

Free parking is available in designated library parking spots at the Boulder Drive location housed in the Putnam Place business center. While at this time the library is not accepting donations of books or media, a Friends of the Fitchburg Public Library book sale corner offers paperback and hardcover books, audio books, CDs, DVDs, and puzzles at bargain prices.

The library will continue to offer information and reference services, public computers, Wi-Fi, hotspots, printing, copying, faxing, meeting spaces for the public, story times, programming, museum passes, and more during the transition. The circulation desk is staffed with helpful library employees, the children's room has a play area, and public restrooms are available — all of the same services, just in a different location.

Putnam Place will be the library's home until the \$40 million renovation and expansion project is completed summer 2025 at the historic downtown landmark. Financial support for the project is being provided through a variety of sources including a \$12.5 million grant awarded by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners through the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program and a combination of the city's American Rescue Plan Act funding and capital budget.

Hinkle said they “will have more to share in the coming months” about the OWL Capital Campaign fundraising efforts to help offset the cost of the project.

The library was founded in 1859 and is home to one of the first children's rooms in the country. According to the press release, the Fitchburg Public Library renovation and expansion project

encompasses two major changes, including the renovation of the existing Wallace Building, which was first built in 1967, and the creation of an entirely new and enlarged Youth Library and meeting room wing.

Once reopened on 610 Main St., the library will offer a Teen Room, a new community room to replace the current auditorium, several smaller meeting rooms, a Learning Lab, a Makerspace, improved access to the library collections, various seating areas throughout the building to study and engage, and more accessible, improved parking.

Library hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday; and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. For more information visit fitchburgpubliclibrary.org.