



Santa Cruz Civil Grand Jury

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How a Community Center Became a “Library”

The Transformational Power of Measure S Funds

Summary

In 2016, residents within the Santa Cruz Public Libraries’ service system approved Measure S, a special tax that, over time, would raise \$67 million. As a special tax, Measure S funds were restricted for use in modernizing, upgrading, and repairing local library branches. The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors elected to use Measure S funds to complete a Santa Cruz County Parks project which they call the “Live Oak Library Annex.”

The Annex (currently being constructed) is about one mile from the existing Live Oak Branch Library. The Annex is, in essence, a collection of study and education spaces with publicly available computers and internet that will be managed by County Parks staff. Santa Cruz Public Libraries (**SCPL**) will not have librarians or books for loan at this location.

This report explores the SCPL’s development of a master plan for the improvement of its ten library branches, which led to the need for a funding source, Measure S. The SCPL’s effort to obtain the cooperation of elected officials in urging their constituents to support Measure S led to a shift away from SCPL’s priorities. The result was the County’s unchallenged decision to use library funds to expand a nearby community center.

The Grand Jury has concluded that the Annex is an expansion of the Live Oak Community Center and not an expansion of the Live Oak Branch Library. Following the State’s elimination of redevelopment agencies, County Parks was left without a ready source of capital funds needed to complete the vision of the Community Center. Measure S filled the void. The Grand Jury recommends that the County Board of Supervisors reassess its decision to use Measure S funds to improve the Live Oak Community Center and restore the voters’ trust.

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Background

The Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury investigated Santa Cruz County's decision to use Measure S funds to complete an addition to the Live Oak Community Center (**Community Center**). The project is called the Live Oak Library Annex (**Annex**). The Grand Jury decided to investigate after reading an opinion letter published in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* suggesting that this was an inappropriate use of library funds.^[1]

This section of the report will explore the:

- Measure S ballot language and why spending decisions are in question
- History and purpose of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries (**SCPL**) plan that drove Measure S
- SCPL's governance and funding that separates decisions about branch construction from branch operation
- Prior County investments in Live Oak that laid the groundwork for the issues the County sought to address with the Annex
- Purpose and scope of the proposed Annex

Measure S Ballot Language

In June 2016, the SCPL asked voters within its service area to approve Measure S:

To modernize, upgrade, and repair local libraries in Santa Cruz, Aptos, Live Oak, Scotts Valley, Boulder Creek, Capitola, Felton and La Selva Beach—replace failing roofs, outdated bathrooms, electrical systems, structurally damaged facilities; support growing use by children, seniors, veterans, and others; expand access to modern technology; and construct/expand facilities where necessary; shall Santa Cruz Libraries Facilities Financing Authority issue \$67,000,000 in bonds for Santa Cruz Libraries Facilities Financing Authority Community Facilities District No. 2016-1; levy a special tax annually on parcels within the Community Facilities District; establish an initial appropriations limit; and assure mandatory accountability?^[2]

Just over 70 percent of voters approved Measure S.^[3] Property owners within the SCPL service area (now the Communities Facilities District No. 2016-1^[4]) are assessed an annual parcel tax that will yield \$67 million in library funds. These funds may be used **only** for the purposes stated in the ballot question.^[2] This limitation on use makes Measure S a special tax, requiring two-thirds voter approval.^[5]

For ballot revenue measures, the two-thirds voter approval requirement is a risky venture. It is estimated that 25 percent of voters will vote “no” on any tax proposal, so a general tax requiring voter approval of only fifty percent plus one is the easier path forward.^[6] On the other hand, a special tax provides voters with the assurance that their tax dollars will be spent on the specific purpose stated in the ballot. If the proposed use of the tax is popular with voters, the risk is acceptable. In the case of Measure S, polling

was favorable. The SCPL spent almost \$570,000 on consultants and legal advice needed to get Measure S on the ballot.^[7] The SCPL's investment in Measure S paid off at the ballot box, but some voters are left wondering what they agreed to pay for.

Preparation for Measure S: Facilities Master Plan

In 2013, the SCPL's operating budget was recovering from a significant funding loss resulting from the 2008 recession. The SCPL was starting to restore services, hours, and staffing under a Compromise Service Model.^[8] This service model:

- Reduced library staff at the branch level to concentrate on movement of materials and answering patron questions
- Organized library professionals with special knowledge to work in teams and float among branches (not dedicated to a branch)
- Assumes self-checkout service available to reduce demand on staff
- Assumes a single point-of-contact for patrons (only one service desk)

Not all library branches had the facilities to support this service model. Minimal staffing requires self-service stations and a centrally located service desk. An investment in facility upgrades to support efficiency could save operating funds over time.

Addressing substandard building needs would also redirect scarce operating funds to staff and programming, rather than leaky roofs and high utility bills.^[8] The SCPL needed to formally assess its library branch facility needs in order to estimate this required financial investment.

A 2013 SCPL building assessment found that most of the library branches were in a state of disrepair.^[9] From this assessment, the SCPL developed—and in April 2013 its governing board approved—the Santa Cruz Public Libraries *Facilities Master Plan 2014–2023 (Master Plan)*. The Master Plan is still featured as the reference point for Measure S on the SCPL website. The SCPL staff summarized its building consultant's findings for the SCPL Board in 2013:

- Library facilities were, on average, 40 years old and there was a pent-up demand for capital repairs.
- The population served by the ten library branches is very mobile and all branches are used by all SCPL patrons.
- Overall, the size of libraries was adequate, although some would benefit from additional space.
- In addition to issues with the Felton and Capitola branches, the Downtown Branch Library needed major rehabilitation or replacement (this branch also houses SCPL's administration).
- Upgrades were needed in all branches to enable library operation under the new service model that would provide much-needed operational efficiencies.^[10]

The SCPL Governance: Building and Operations Are Completely Separate

The SCPL does not own any of the ten library branches that it operates, nor does SCPL collect or control the operating funds it uses to operate its ten library branches. The SCPL leases its library branch buildings from the city or County in which the branch is located (**Member Agencies**).^[11] The SCPL uses funds received from the Operating Authority to pay for the operation and maintenance of its leased facilities. The SCPL’s governance is explained in Table 1 and [Appendix A](#).

Table 1. Santa Cruz Public Libraries Governance

Libraries Governance		
Library Joint Powers Authority (SCPL JPA)	Library Facilities Financing Authority (SCPL LFFA)	Library Financing Authority (Operating Authority)
Oversees SCPL operations, sets policies and library branch service levels, hires and supervises the Library Director.	Collects and distributes the Measure S parcel tax to the Member Agencies for library modernization or repair.	Distributes operating revenue (taxes and general fund contributions) to the two library systems in Santa Cruz County.
Member Agencies: Santa Cruz County (unincorporated) City of Capitola City of Santa Cruz City of Scotts Valley	Member Agencies: Santa Cruz County (unincorporated) City of Capitola City of Santa Cruz City of Scotts Valley	Member Agencies: Santa Cruz County (unincorporated) City of Capitola City of Santa Cruz City of Scotts Valley City of Watsonville
Excludes City of Watsonville	Excludes City of Watsonville	

Source: Generated from Grand Jury Interview data.^[11]

The Live Oak Branch Library is an example of SCPL’s dependence on its Member Agencies’ building funds. In 1989, the County established the Live Oak Library in a local shopping center (see [Appendix B](#)). This was one of the ten libraries SCPL began operating upon its formation in 1996. In 1998, Santa Cruz County’s Redevelopment Agency bought the former Albatross Restaurant for use as the Live Oak Interim Library.^[12] In 2006, the Redevelopment Agency expanded the Live Oak Interim Library to its current size of 13,500 square feet and it became the Live Oak Branch Library.^{[13] [14]} Along with the Community Center and dozens of parks, the County’s Redevelopment funds proved to be a flexible and ready source of funds that improved the lives of Live Oak residents.^[15] The SCPL benefited as well.

While SCPL commissioned the Master Plan to serve as the blueprint for the use of Measure S funds, the branch owner—the County—had the discretion on how Measure S funds would be used to improve its library branches, including the Live Oak Branch Library. Although there is coordination between the SCPL and the Member Agency in the design and features of a library building, ultimately the Member Agency, as the library building’s owner, dictates what will be built.^[16] If a Member Agency runs short of cash for construction, the Member Agency is expected to make up the difference with other funds. The SCPL, on the other hand, is expected to come up with the operating funds. Given the County Redevelopment Agency’s upgrade and expansion seven years earlier, the Master Plan called for relatively little work at the Live Oak Branch Library.

The Annex Project: Concept and Vision

The SCPL’s branches vary greatly in age and size, and in how well they support modern library service. However, the Master Plan stated that the number of library branches was sufficient.^[17] In the Master Plan, the SCPL “confirmed that the current network of libraries will be maintained without adding, consolidating, or eliminating facilities in any communities.”^[17] One feature that all ten SCPL branches had in common when voters considered Measure S was the presence of SCPL library staff and books for checkout.

In the same year that the County Redevelopment Agency relocated the Live Oak Interim Library to its current location, the Redevelopment Agency completed a County Parks project, the Simpkins Family Swim Center & Live Oak Community Center **less than a mile away**.^{[18] [19]} The County affirmed its belief in the Live Oak Branch Library location with the 2006 expansion and renovation. These public investments, specifically their distance and resulting lack of synergy, will prove to be important to the County’s use of Measure S funds for the Annex.

The earliest mention of a Live Oak Branch Library **annex** in a public memo that we found is in an update to the Board of Supervisors on the Felton Branch Library dated July 6, 2016—**after** the vote on Measure S.^[20] The County did not share the Annex concept and vision until October 2017, over a year after voters approved Measure S. The County’s community outreach fleshed out the concept as “a new learning center–library annex.”^[21] A County staff memorandum to the County Board of Supervisors outlines the synergy the Annex would create among Shoreline Middle School, the nearby Boys & Girls Club of Live Oak, and “the County facility (Simpkins Family Swim Center & Live Oak Community Center).” All three of these facilities are immediately adjacent to each other.

The staff memorandum to the Board went on to describe how library funds might be used to improve the County’s Park facility:

Measure S funded facilities could include a flexible, centrally located space that could be used by both small groups and individuals for reading and conversation with access to a small collection of library materials and technology; a **classroom program** space for story time, meetings, trainings and classes; **small group study rooms**; access to a **flexible**

outdoor space for gatherings, performances and other classes;
places for regular visits of the book mobile and bike mobile...

...It is also proposed that feasibility studies and planning for the library annex include other upgrades to the existing facility to **further activate the community center concept**. These include the opportunity for an enterprise kitchen in the existing commercial kitchen, perhaps operated by the Boys & Girls Club, offering food in conjunction with a small indoor and/or outdoor café space; a child care center; a room for exercise equipment; covering the warm water pool; and covering the Boys & Girls Club basketball court. Staff proposes to develop funding strategies for these ideas as part of a feasibility study and concept plan for the overall concept. (Emphasis added.)

Except for the “small collection of library materials,” this concept underlies the Annex being constructed today. The County’s Public Works website describes the vision for the Annex “to create a community gathering and learning hub.” Public Works describes the project as “flexible program space, a classroom, study rooms, public computers and laptop bar, and a new plaza integrated into Simpkins Swim and Community Center.”^[22] The Annex project plans describe the added space as a library lobby, children’s area, library learning center, group study area, and an active learning room.^[23] Even the SCPL January 27, 2022, update calls the Annex “a new addition to the Simpkins Center providing a classroom and study rooms—a community learning center to complement existing uses.”^[24]

The Community Center’s total added area is about 2,000 square feet, which approximates the size of the Live Oak Branch Library’s remodeled children and teen area^[25] (see [Appendices C and D](#)). But, while the Live Oak Branch Library continues to have library staff and books for checkout, the Annex will have Parks staff and computers.

Scope and Methodology

This report focuses only on the County’s distribution of funds among its library branches because only the County proposed to use Measure S funds to improve a community center.

The Grand Jury investigated:

- How SCPL’s vision for Measure S expressed in the Master Plan was impacted by its governance model and the political process
- How the State’s elimination of redevelopment agencies in 2012 impacted the development of park and recreational facilities in Live Oak
- The existing Live Oak Branch Library’s shortcomings that may have led to the decision to create the Annex
- Why library staff cannot be assigned to the Annex, and why the Annex will not have the most basic elements of a library—library staff or books for checkout
- Information available on the resources that will be available for the public in the

Annex, and how the area and equipment will be operated and maintained (without library staff)

The Grand Jury also looked into:

- Opinions on the changing roles of libraries
- The design and funding challenges presented at several of the branches and the role of elected officials in meeting their constituents' needs
- The challenges yet to come in meeting the financial demands of expanded library branches across the County

The Grand Jury interviewed:

- Library patrons and Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries
- Library staff (former and present)
- County officials (former and present) in a range of county functions: Administration, Redevelopment, Parks, and Public Works

The Grand Jury also reviewed the SCPL website, Measure S ballot materials, the meeting minutes of several agencies involved in the approval of Measure S and the Annex project, the Live Oak Branch Library and Annex floor plans, and the draft Memorandum of Understanding between the Santa Cruz County Parks Department and the SCPL for operation of the Annex.

Both the Live Oak Branch Library and the Simpkins Family Swim Center & Live Oak Community Center are currently closed for renovation, but we toured the area of both facilities to better understand the opportunities and constraints of each site and how these might impact service delivery.

Investigation

This investigation explored how SCPL communicated its vision to Measure S voters, and how that vision was derailed by political influence. The Grand Jury identified SCPL's limitations in embracing an eleventh library branch, as well as the Live Oak Branch Library and Community Center's limitations in meeting the needs of the Live Oak community. The result is the County's investment of library funds in a Community Center that is, in essence, a building addition providing technology and educational resources—not library staff or books.

Did Political Influence Change the Priorities of the Master Plan?

With the Master Plan complete, the SCPL polled voters to determine the level of tax that voters would tolerate to yield the most money to support the Plan.^[26] ^[7] The SCPL's next focus was getting the measure approved. This effort required the influence of elected officials.

There are strict rules about using public resources (staff) and funds to prepare a measure for the ballot. Public agencies may use public funds to test whether the measure might pass, craft ballot language that meets State law requirements, and obtain legal advice. But the Courts draw the line at using public resources for a campaign. Once the County Board of Supervisors approved Measure S for the June

2016 ballot, SCPL staff could not campaign for Measure S.^[27] The SCPL needed elected officials to urge their constituents to vote “yes” on Measure S.

To secure their support, the SCPL JPA Board leadership reached out to elected officials.^{[28] [29]} The JPA’s request for support became what we concluded were essentially negotiations for the future use of Measure S funds. Library staff was not involved in these discussions.^[30]

One outcome of these discussions was that the County Board of Supervisors set aside \$5 million in Measure S funds for Live Oak.^{[31] [28]} This was not an expenditure identified in the Master Plan. With Redevelopment’s 2006 investment in the Live Oak Branch Library, the Master Plan called for only \$1 million of capital maintenance improvements for this branch.

On December 15, 2015, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors approved the distribution of Measure S funds among all of the SCPL Member Agencies. The Board committed \$5 million of the County’s share for “Live Oak.”^[31] The staff memorandum recommending this Board action offered no explanation as to how the sum of \$5 million was calculated, or how it would be spent in Live Oak. The Live Oak Branch **Library** was not called out as the target of the Board’s decision. The Board did not reference or take note of the SCPL Master Plan, which did not propose this level of expenditure on the Live Oak Branch Library. This Board action posed more questions than it answered.

The Master Plan As a Guard Rail for Measure S Expenditures

If voters outside of Live Oak missed the County’s December 15, 2015, Board of Supervisors meeting, they would not have known of this dedication of Measure S funds for Live Oak. The County’s Live Oak commitment did not appear in the Measure S ballot materials.^[32] Nor was the commitment referenced on the SCPL website, which notes the bond measure would address the “most urgent needs” of library branches and offers the Master Plan as the defining statement of those needs.^[33] Should voters have reasonably expected that Measure S funds might be used to expand a community center one mile from an existing library branch?

There were limitations in using the Master Plan as the spending plan for Measure S. The 2013 Master Plan’s cost estimates were out of date by June 2016 due to rising construction costs. The Master Plan was developed without the community outreach that has become customary for today’s public projects.^[10] But the Master Plan was SCPL’s vision to bring all library branches to a common service level and model. And, the Master Plan was clear in stating the SCPL’s intention to modernize and improve its existing ten library branches.

People feel betrayed when they see their voter-approved tax dollars being spent on something they did not anticipate. A prime example is the ongoing and robust discussion in the *Sentinel’s* Letters to the Editor regarding the relocation of the Downtown Branch Library.^[34] While there are several aspects to that controversy—which are outside the scope of this report—all proposed alternatives for the downtown library would use Measure S funds on a structure that will house library staff and books. Also, the library branch existed at the time voters approved Measure S. The Annex, on the

other hand, will be a newly constructed space within an existing community center that will have no assigned library staff and no library books for checkout.^{[35] [36]}

If voters understood that the SCPL had no effective way to control its Member Agencies' use of Measure S funds, would Measure S have passed?

The Importance of Librarians

Not only is the SCPL a bystander without direct say in how Measure S funds are spent, the SCPL is expected to staff and maintain whatever the SCPL Member Agency builds with Measure S funds. Because of the SCPL's short supply of operating funds, the Annex will have computers and wireless internet, but no library staff or library books available for checkout.^{[35] [36] [37]}

The traditional idea of a quiet library with professionally trained staff and books for checkout is expanding to include outdoor meeting space and books available through a computer application. However, the role of the librarian in facilitating its patrons' learning is still needed. Even the County's commissioned Annex study notes that "Librarians have increasingly become mentors and facilitators within their community as opposed to navigators within a library. They can serve an important role to help people navigate the abundance of resources among us and help turn information into knowledge."^[38]

Given the Annex's proposed synergy with nearby Shoreline Middle School, the Grand Jury takes note of a downward trend in schools being able to afford library teachers.^[39] Research shows school librarians positively impact student achievement at all grade levels, but they are not as readily available as they once were. Library teachers are needed to help students learn the differences between online resources, for example, assessing credibility and bias in various media which is critical in today's online environment.

Instead of librarians, County Parks staff will be responsible for day-to-day operations of the Annex, including public use of the computer equipment.^{[40] [41]} Library staff will be on site **only** when they have a program in the building, just as SCPL sometimes uses the London Nelson Community Center in downtown Santa Cruz.

Regardless of the SCPL's actual use of the Annex, SCPL will have to use its limited operating revenue for the Annex's proportional share of the Community Center's utilities and janitorial services. Should the SCPL no longer wish to use the Annex (or cannot afford to pay for upkeep of the Annex and equipment), a current draft agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) between the SCPL and Santa Cruz County Parks provides that either party may terminate the agreement and Santa Cruz County Parks will retain the benefit of the Measure S improvements.^{[36] [37]}

The Annex is still under construction, so SCPL is not yet incurring the Annex's additional operating costs. The same goes for other Measure S projects still under construction. The SCPL JPA has not discussed or dealt with the increased operating costs from all of the Measure S library expansions.^{[42] [43]} This failure is concerning as the ten original branches are expected to have library staff. The SCPL Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2022–2023 (FY 23) notes that staff is just over 45 percent of their

overall budget.^[44] The JPA has not yet established overall branch staffing to meet the needs of the branches that will soon be reopening. These plans and impacts will fall outside the FY 23 budget process. Voters should stay tuned on how SCPL's budget challenges will be resolved.

The Annex will likely improve the lives of Live Oak residents. The central location of the Community Center and adjacency to Shoreline Middle School offer a unique opportunity to address the after-school needs of middle-school students who have aged out of formal after-school care programs. The learning center can also be used for adult and senior education programs. The Annex will help bridge the gap for those who may not have access to the internet and computers at home. But without librarians or a selection of library books, the Annex is a departure from the SCPL's other ten branches. The grand jury is of the opinion that the County did not have the discretion to use Measure S funds for the improvement of a County Parks facility.

Why Couldn't the Live Oak Branch Library Be Improved to Fulfill the County's Vision for the Annex?

The short answer is location, location, location.^[24] The Live Oak Branch Library site is limited by natural features that restrict the ability to increase the building or the parking lot size, which are both needed to allow for larger programming events.^[45] But, the SCPL could always access the Community Center's existing Community Room, which offers ample parking and meeting space for library programs (see [Appendix C](#)).

The Live Oak Branch Library's most limiting factor was the library's location relative to the County's primary intended Annex users: students. While the library building may have scenic vistas, it is not located close to the Community Center or the students who need continued learning opportunities after school. The Live Oak Branch Library does have a separate area for children and teens that is almost the same size as the entire Annex (1,953 square feet; see [Appendix D](#)), but Shoreline Middle School students would have to walk about a mile to get there.^[46] And, it appears the County's main objective was to create an after-school study area and/or evening adult education space, not a library facility consistent with the rest of the SCPL system.

The Redevelopment Agency's Impact on County Parks

In government budgets, there is an important distinction between money needed for one-time uses, such as buying land or constructing a building (capital funds), and money needed on an ongoing basis to operate the facility (staff, utilities, maintenance, etc.). The County's Redevelopment Agency was a source of flexible capital funds that could be used for any public project within Live Oak. The Agency paid for an impressive array of good public projects that benefit the Live Oak community today. But, in 2012, California abolished redevelopment agencies and so this ready source of capital funding was no longer available to the County.^[47]

Santa Cruz County Parks benefited greatly from redevelopment for capital investments in new parks and facilities.^[48] With the Redevelopment Agency's demise, County Parks was left without capital funds to remodel the Community Center to address the neighborhood's need for public computer and internet resources. The County used Measure S to fill the void. The Board of Supervisors' December 2015 Measure S commitment to Live Oak has since grown. The Board delegated authority for the Director of Public Works to award the construction contract for the Annex based on the following sources of funds:

- Measure S funding of \$5,750,600
- County Library Fund funding of \$302,340
- County Parks funding of \$500,000

The total project cost is projected to be \$6,552,940.^[49]

The Annex's Impact on the SCPL Operating Budget

The SCPL prepared for Measure S by taking stock of the condition of its branches and developing a service model that would provide system-wide improvements to all patrons that use all branches. Despite SCPL's intentions, political interests won out over the Master Plan without regard for the impact on SCPL's operating budget.

The SCPL will soon be responsible for maintaining a new location, and replacing lost or damaged equipment in the Annex. This responsibility will be competing with the costs of staff and operation for the ten branch libraries. As noted, SCPL's operating budget challenges are yet to be resolved. The Operating Authority, with a different set of Member Agencies than the SCPL, doles out SCPL's operating budget. The makeup of the Operating Authority, shown in Table 1, shows the complexity in addressing the issue. The Operating Authority collects revenue from various sources to support both the SCPL and the Watsonville Public Library system—sales tax, property taxes, and general fund contributions from some Member Agencies (whose residents don't pay a property tax).^[31] Whether resolution of SCPL's operating budget will further complicate this organizational and financial quagmire is yet to be seen.

Conclusion

The Grand Jury acknowledges that the Live Oak Community Center is ideally located to serve the Live Oak community. The resources that the Annex will offer seniors, adults, children, and teens will fulfill the promise of the former Redevelopment Agency in creating the Live Oak Community Center by offering space and resources for after-school study and adult education.

That being said, the Annex has little in common with the SCPL's ten existing library branches. The Annex is also likely to become a concern for Santa Cruz County Parks staff that will soon have a new responsibility: keeping the learning spaces, internet, and computer resources in the Annex operational and available for the people who need them. Similarly, SCPL now has a new fiscal responsibility to pay for an eleventh "library" branch.

The Board of Supervisors' use of Measure S funds for the Annex contradicts one of the conclusions of the Master Plan—that all patrons use all libraries—and focuses only on the neighborhood branch and voters. Could this \$5.75 million have been used elsewhere in the system for improvement of an already existing library branch? Probably so, but we may never know.

The SCPL could have offered more transparency on its website and in its voting materials as to how the Measure S \$67 million total was estimated and how it would be spent among the library branches. The SCPL's lack of transparency could mean that the next call for a special tax may be rejected for lack of trust. This would be an unfortunate outcome given the unique and special role that libraries, parks, and community centers provide. These public facilities improve our quality of life, and if left to compete for general revenue contributions, they may lose again.

Findings

Measure S Voter Information

- F1.** The plain language of Measure S required use of Measure S funds for the modernization, upgrade, and repair of the existing local library branches—not community centers.
- F2.** The Santa Cruz Public Libraries website states that Measure S funds would be used to address the “most urgent needs” identified in the *Facilities Master Plan*, which stated no new library branches were needed and focused only on the needs of the existing ten library branches—likely misleading voters.
- F3.** Voter materials disclosed how Measure S funds would be divided among the Santa Cruz Public Libraries' Member Agencies, but did not disclose the allocation of \$5 million to a Live Oak Library Annex within the Live Oak Community Center—likely misleading voters.

The Annex Is Not a Library

- F4.** Following the dissolution of redevelopment agencies in California, County Parks was left without a ready source of capital funds needed to fulfill the vision of the Live Oak Community Center as the heart of Live Oak, and Measure S filled the void.
- F5.** The Annex is an expansion of the Live Oak Community Center and not an expansion of the Live Oak Branch Library.
- F6.** The County's decision to use Measure S funds for the Live Oak Library Annex in the Live Oak Community Center will impact the Santa Cruz Public Libraries operating budget.

Recommendations

- R1.** By December 31, 2022, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors should reassess its decision to use Measure S funds to improve the Live Oak Community Center and either reimburse the Library Facilities Financing Authority or commit additional funds to establish the Annex as a library resource consistent with other SCPL branches. (F1, F4, F5, F6)
- R2.** In the case of any future ballot measures, the Santa Cruz Public Libraries should inform voters of prior commitments of ballot funds, such as the County Board of Supervisors’ commitment of Measure S funds to Live Oak. (F2, F3, F5)
- R3.** In the case of any future ballot measures, the Santa Cruz Public Libraries should inform voters of the impact of facility expansion on its future operating budgets. (F6)

Required Responses

<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Findings</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Respond Within/ Respond By</i>
Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors	F1, F4–F6	R1	90 Days September 20, 2022
Santa Cruz Public Libraries Joint Powers Authority	F1–F3, F5, F6	R1, R2, R3	90 Days September 20, 2022

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Websites

Santa Cruz Public Libraries Website

www.santacruzpl.org/

Santa Cruz Public Libraries Measuring Measure S

www.santacruzpl.org/measure_s/

Santa Cruz Public Libraries Boards

www.santacruzpl.org/library_boards/

Santa Cruz County Redevelopment Agency

sccounty01.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/red/

Site Visits

The following sites are closed for renovations, but the Grand Jury members visited their locations to apprise their vicinities, parking, surrounding neighborhoods, and general features of interest:

Live Oak Branch Library, 2380 Portola Dr., Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Simpkins Family Swim Center & Live Oak Community Center, 979 17th Ave.,
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Appendix A—Libraries Governance Governance Flowchart

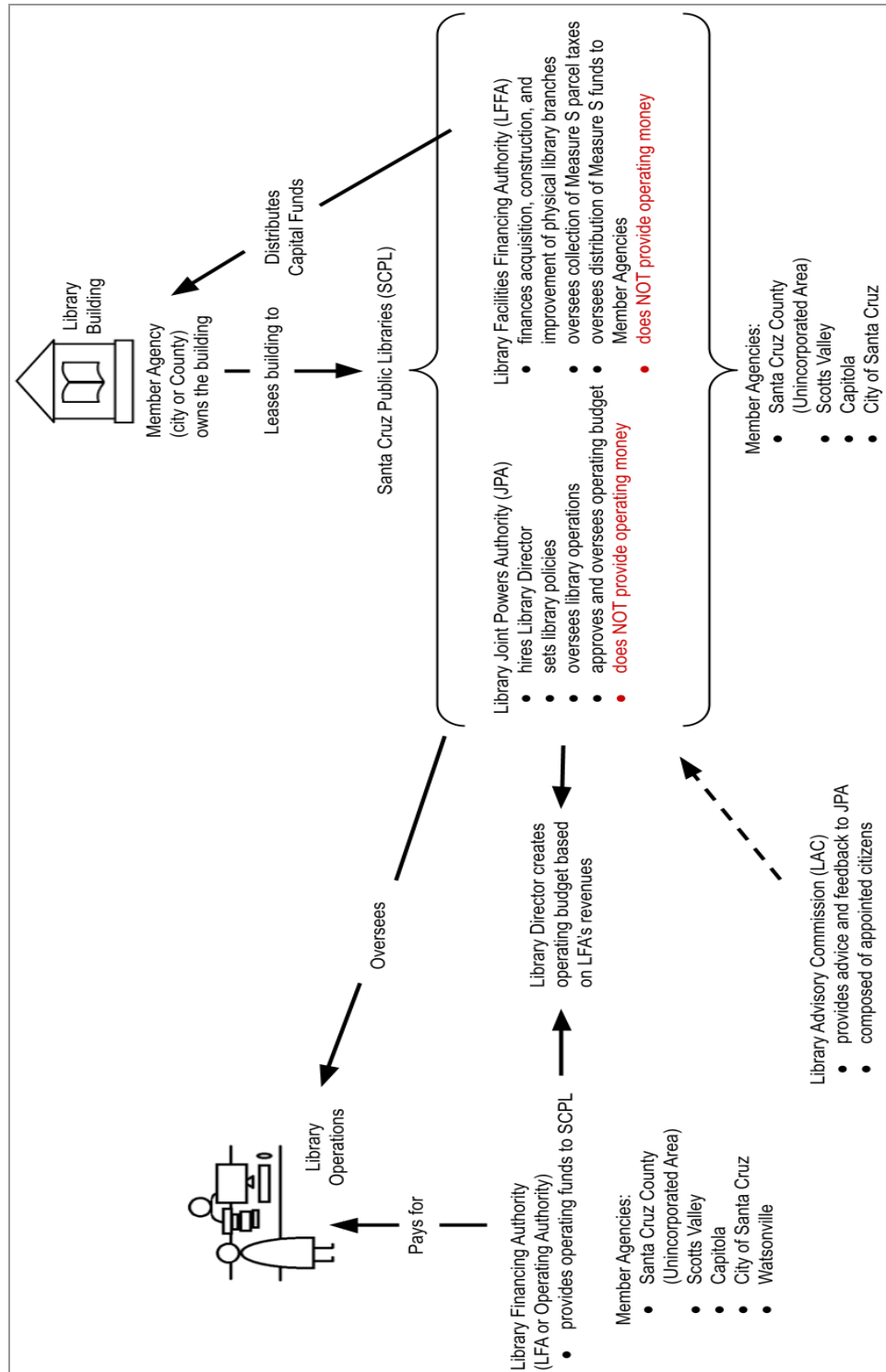


Figure 4. Library Governance^[50]

Appendix B—Live Oak Branch Library Timeline of Events

Date	Event
April, 1989	The Live Oak Library opens at East Cliff Village Shopping Center. From its inception, the main focus of the Live Oak Library was to "orient it toward the greatest single need for Live Oak..." which was children's services. ^[14]
1996	The Santa Cruz Public Libraries (SCPL) system is created, consisting of a network of ten neighborhood library branches distributed countywide, a web-based digital library, a bookmobile, and community-based programs. ^[51]
February, 1998	Live Oak Library Expansion—this “interim” branch library thrived at its location under redevelopment by the Santa Cruz Redevelopment Agency. ^[12]
Summer of 1998	The Simpkins Family Swim Center opened to the public. ^[19]
January 17, 2006	The Santa Cruz Redevelopment Agency remodeled the Live Oak Branch Library and reopened it to the public. ^[13]
Fall, 2009	The Santa Cruz Redevelopment Agency upgraded the Simpkins Swim Center with energy-efficiencies and brought it into compliance with current accessibility and safety regulations. ^[48]
February, 2012	All redevelopment agencies in the State of California were dissolved. ^[47] Redevelopment projects in the Live Oak neighborhood were impacted.
March 28, 2013	Santa Cruz Public Libraries publishes Facilities Master Plan (<i>Santa Cruz Public Libraries Facilities Master Plan 2014–2023</i>). ^[17]
December 15, 2015	The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors approved the allocation of Measure S funds between all of the SCPL Member Agencies, and dedicated \$5 million of the County’s share for Live Oak. ^[31]

Date	Event
June 7, 2016	Voters approve Measure S. With 70 percent approval, the voters agreed to fund Measure S, the Library Improvement Bond Measure. ^[52]
November, 2016	County Supervisor John Leopold leads a group of interested citizens to explore adding library spaces to the Boys & Girls Club or Simpkins Family Swim Center in Live Oak. ^[53]
October 24, 2017	The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors received a report on the Live Oak Library Annex Project and approved the concept and location for the Live Oak Library Annex Project as described. ^[53]
December 10, 2019	The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors accepts the Noll & Tam Architects' <i>Live Oak Library Annex Study and Concept Plan</i> . ^[45]
November 18, 2021	The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors approve the plans and specifications for the construction of the Annex, identify the sources of funds for the construction contract, and delegate authority to the Director of Public Works to award the construction contract to the lowest qualified bidder. ^[49]

Appendix C—Live Oak Library Annex Floor Plans

Live Oak Library Annex Floor Plans

Existing Scope Area

Prepared by Noll & Tam Architects, Berkeley, California

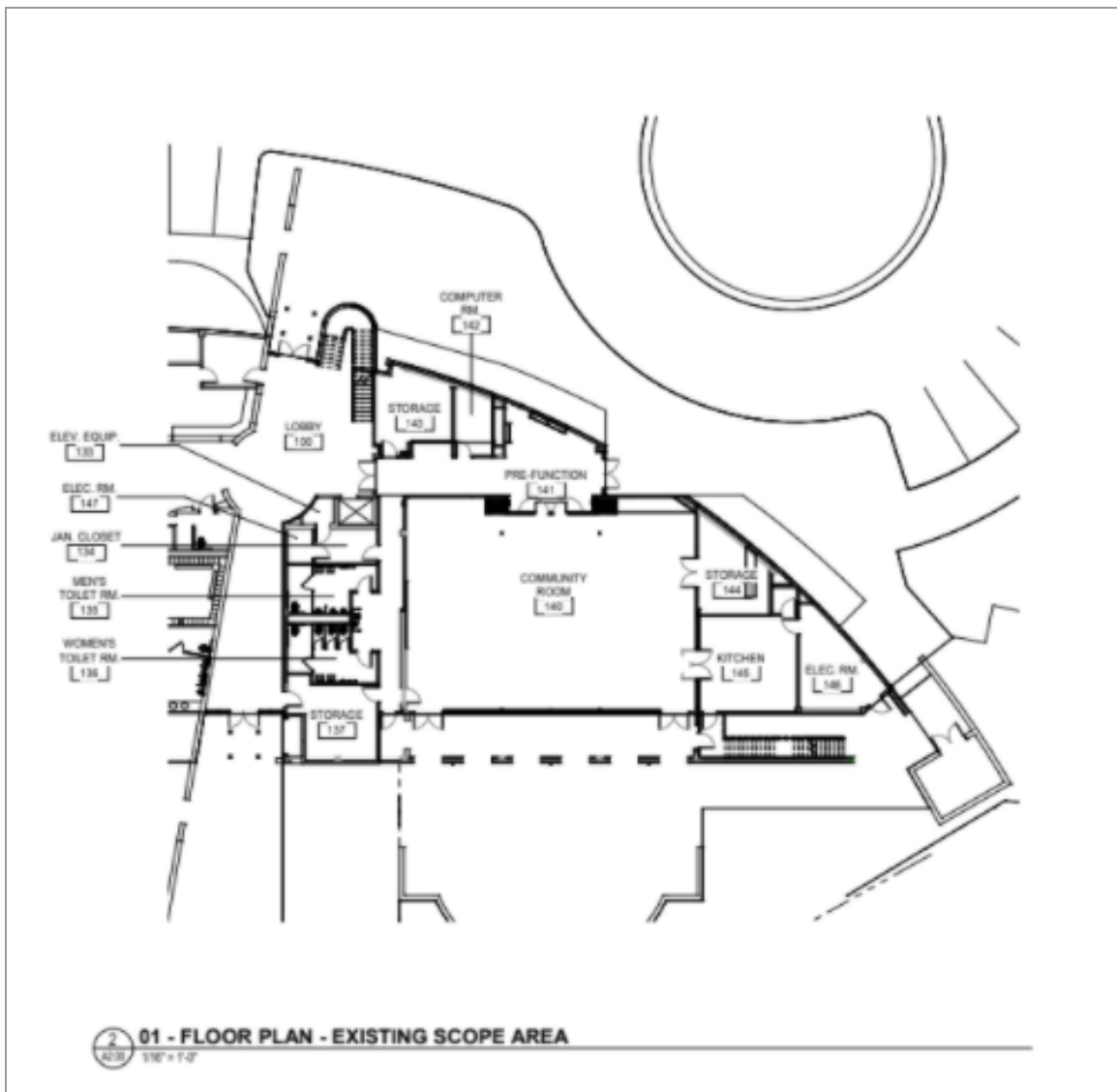


Figure 2. Live Oak Library Annex Project Scope Area^[23]

Live Oak Library Annex Floor Plans

Project Scope Area

Prepared by Noll & Tam Architects, Berkeley, California

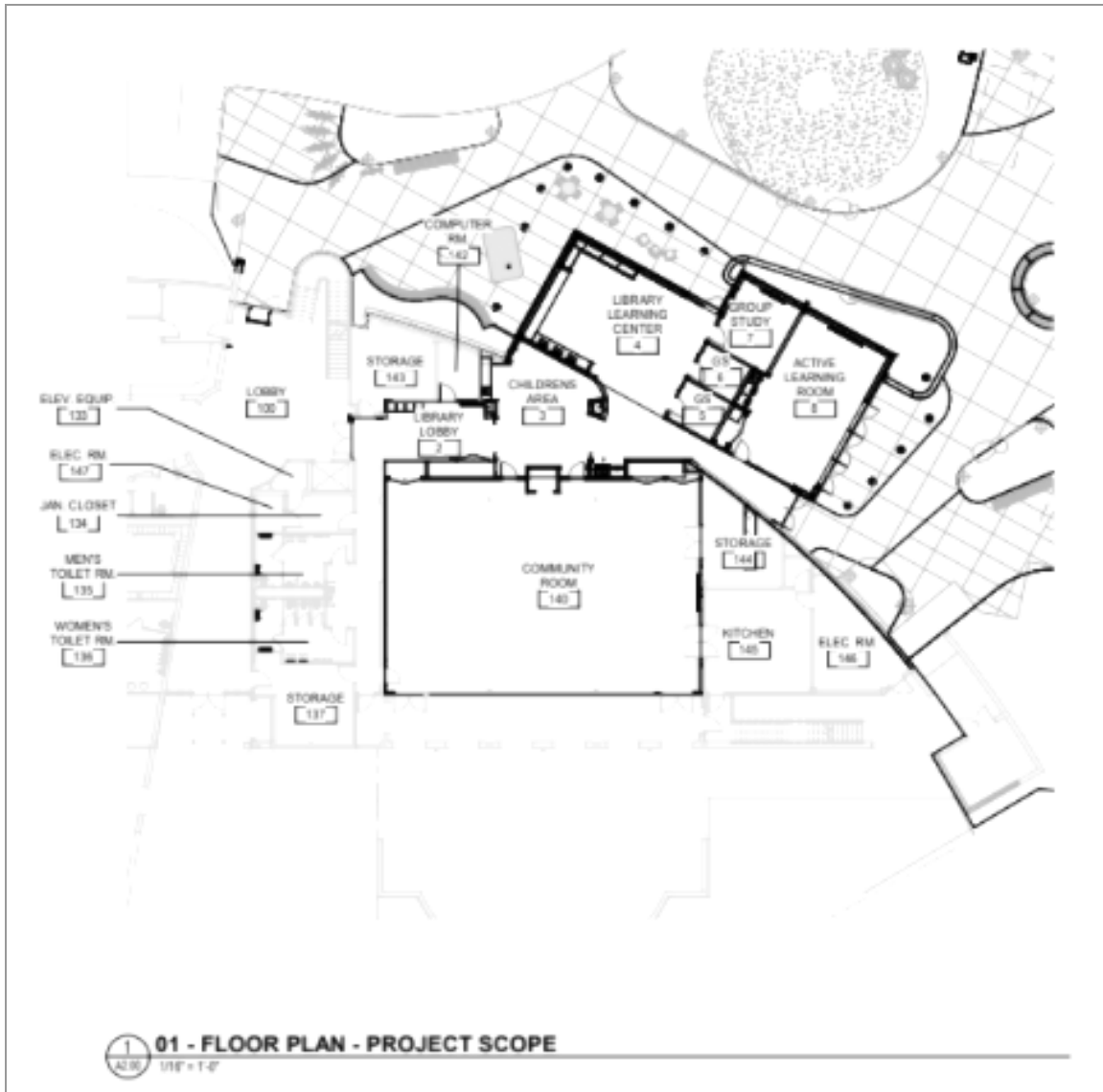


Figure 3. Live Oak Library Annex Project Scope Area^[23]

Appendix D—Live Oak Branch Library Floor Plan

Live Oak Branch Library Floor Plan

Prepared by Ripley Scoggin Partners, San Francisco, California

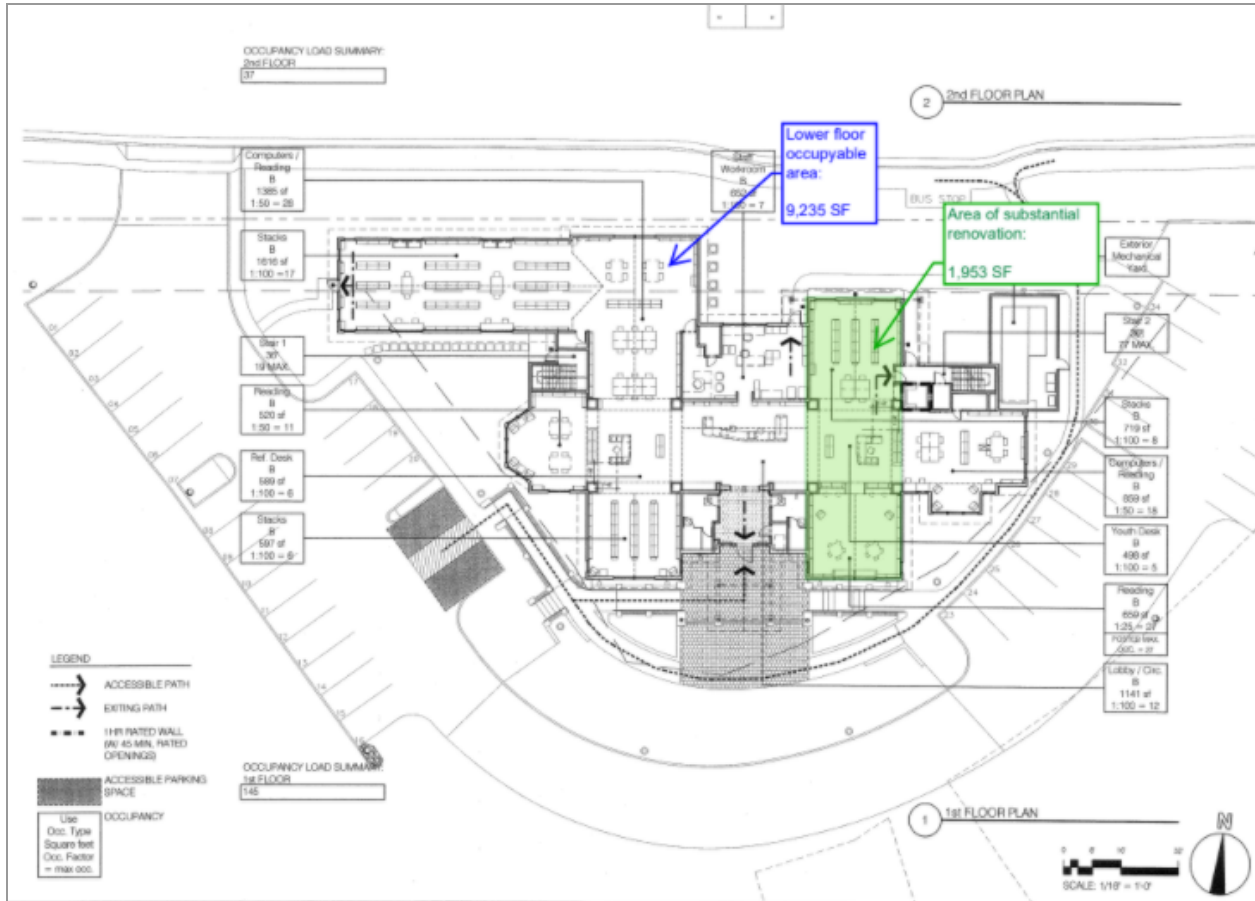


Figure 1. Live Oak Branch Library Floor Plan^[46]