

### Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will we have to buy a library card to use the new library?

A: No

Q: Will the city give the new building to the district at the end of the contract?

A: No. But if the voters approve annexation, the library assets would all transfer to the district.

Q: If we vote to annex, will my taxes be increased?

A: It is legally possible, but unlikely with the current mayor and council. The city's property tax limit is reduced by the amount of the district's tax levy so the maximum tax limit is unchanged by annexation. Because the city does not tax at its maximum, the mayor and city council will have to reduce the city property tax to ensure that no tax increase occurs as a result of annexation. Sedro-Woolley has not raised property taxes in 9 years and will see a decrease in city property taxes in 2017 as the public safety building bond is retired (taxes will be reduced by approximately \$.28/\$1,000 in assessed valuation).

Q: Will city library staff be fired?

A: No. The agreement will require that the city's employees be hired by the district, with no reduction in pay or benefits.

Q: Will city library staff be fired six months or a year after the partnership is formed?

A: The district personnel policies would apply to the employees and as public employees in Washington State, it is unlikely anyone would be fired without unresolved performance issues.

Q: Will our books be discarded?

A: Other than through the normal process of culling a collection (same as today), the library books will not be discarded.

Q: What will happen to the city library's unique historical collection?

A: Special provisions will be negotiated to ensure that the collection is maintained and if at any point the district wants to discard the collection it will either go to the city or to a historical society for continued public use and enjoyment.

Q: What will happen to the city library board?

A: It will be dissolved.

Q: Isn't this taxation without representation?

A: No. The city council represents the people of Sedro-Woolley in making a partnership agreement and city residents will be appointed to the district board providing representation on future library operational issues.

Q: Why don't you just tell us the details of the agreement?

A: There is no agreement.

Q: Is the city really closing its library?

A: The city library's assets and employees will be transferred to the new regional library so the moment one ends another begins. This is much like what the La Conner community did in the early 1990's and not unlike the city closing city hall on Murdock and opening the new city hall on Metcalf.

Q: How will I be able to influence the decision-making process?

A: If and when the negotiating team makes a recommendation, that will trigger a minimum of four public meetings with public process – it is expected that the council will hear the proposed concept and community concerns and provide direction to the negotiating team to address concerns. This is a multi-step process with meaningful engagement, not a rubber stamp. The city council's role is as decision-maker and they take that role seriously.

Q: What's the rush?

A: There is no rush – this process started in 2012, stalled until late 2015 and interest in collaboration has been rekindled over the past year. All necessary time will be taken to work through this process.

Q: I keep hearing that the district is considering a 10,000 square foot library, why would the city agree to that?

A: The district is talking about working with the city on a project as well as a “go it alone” plan. The 10,000 square foot library is for the “go it alone” plan; a joint library would need to be larger than 10,000 square feet.

Q: Will the city pay to build a new library and then give it to the district?

A: No. If a conceptual agreement is reached for future consideration, that agreement will address how assets and liabilities are distributed if the partnership fails. The city will not give its library to the district any more than the district would give its library to the city.

Q: Will I have a chance to comment on the proposal in the future?

A: Yes, the city council has committed, by resolution, to a minimum of four public meetings, each with public comment, prior to any action on a partnership agreement. The meetings are specifically set up to allow the council to hear from the public, propose desired modifications and then consider any resulting draft agreements.

Q: Why doesn't the city just “go it alone”?

A: By combining resources and serving our shared service areas, the two public entities can better use limited tax resources and avoid duplication of services in the same city.

Q: Can I provide comments after tonight?

A: Yes, comments mailed to the city hall, attention Mayor Wagoner, will all be shared with the council; additionally the city council takes public comments at every regular meeting.