

# Green Lake library in Seattle closing until 2024 for seismic retrofit

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photo by Dale Lane Photography

**1 of 2** | The Green Lake branch of the Seattle Public Library will close Wednesday for renovations and will not open again until early 2024.



By **Daniel Beekman** 

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The Seattle Public Library's 113-year-old Green Lake branch [will close](#) Wednesday for renovations and won't reopen until early 2024.

Patrons can't visit or return books at Green Lake during the closure, and the parking lot won't be available for parking. The nearest Library branches are Greenwood, Northeast, University and Wallingford.

The multimillion dollar project, mostly funded by a property tax levy Seattle voters approved [in 2019](#), will give the Green Lake branch a seismic retrofit, an accessibility upgrade, air conditioning and a remodeled interior, including new study rooms, lighting and furniture.

The Green Lake branch, located on East Green Lake Drive North across from Green Lake Park, is one of three buildings being renovated as part of the city's 2019 levy, which is raising \$219 million over seven years. The University and Columbia branches will be next, according to the Library's schedule, with the three projects using about \$14 million in levy funds. The Green Lake, University and Columbia branches were each built more than 100 years ago with grants from steel baron and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie.

[The original construction](#) of the Green Lake branch started in 1909 and the building, with its tile roof and stucco exterior, opened in 1910. Carnegie donated \$35,000, residents raised \$3,000 and the city contributed \$1,000, [according to the Library](#). The building has been renovated multiple times, including [in 2004](#), and now spans 9,500 square feet on two levels. It's listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Seattle landmark.

The branch's seismic upgrade will consist of structural changes like [steel structures and concrete-reinforced walls](#) to increase the safety of the building during earthquakes. The accessibility improvements will include a new ramp from the sidewalk, a new

accessible parking stall, new restrooms and a new west-side entrance leading to a new elevator.

The branch's gas boiler will be replaced with an electric heat pump that will provide heating and air conditioning throughout the building, allowing it to remain open and provide shelter for community members on hot days.

The Library had more than 130 full- or partial-day closures because of heat [last summer](#), with nine of the 27 branches lacking air conditioning. The Library closes branches when indoor temperatures reach a certain threshold for more than an hour. (Last summer, the threshold was 80 degrees.)

The Green Lake and University branches had the most full-day heat closures last summer, canceling service for seven days each. Green Lake also closed part of the day 14 times and University did so 17 times.

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