

# Pico Branch Library Project

April 2014

A new branch of the Santa Monica Public Library has come to the Pico neighborhood. The Santa Monica City Council designated Capital Improvement Program funds to build an 8,690 square foot, single-story library at 2201 Pico Boulevard in Virginia Avenue Park. The Pico Branch Library fulfills a neighborhood need and is the result of community input from an extensive survey and a series of public meetings held between fall 2008 and spring 2011. Groundbreaking took place on August 15, 2012, and the branch first opened its doors to the public on April 24, 2014.

Designed by Koning Eizenberg Architecture, the Santa Monica Public Library branch is sited to preserve park open space and the Farmers Market area and will not need additional parking. The library is oriented toward Pico Boulevard and is located between the south side of the Thelma Terry building and the north end of the Farmers Market zone.

The library has a two-building design. The main, 7,872 square-foot facility consists of adult, teen, children's and Spanish-language collections; popular materials; a children's area; group study rooms; reading areas; public computers; and customer support services. To the west, across a fire lane, is The Annex, a separate 818 square-foot community room, that will be used for story times, educational, and cultural programs. The structures are connected at the roofline with a trellis, creating a pedestrian breezeway. A small, exterior amphitheater with terraced steps on the community room's south face enhances the building's relationship to the Park Center and the Teen Center. The community room also has the advantage of being able to function independently of regular library hours and can be rented by the public.



View of the Pico Branch Library from the Farmers Market  
Rendering by Koning Eizenberg Architecture

The Pico Branch project incorporates many sustainable features. The primary library building has clear glazing on three sides to provide natural daylighting and a strong visual connection to the park. A dynamic, folded roof design incorporates skylights for indirect lighting. The roof is treated to reflect sunlight to mitigate the heat island effect that contributes to smog. Large projecting roof overhangs and an expansive fabric canopy along the entrance façade provide shade for visitors. Landscape improvements include new trees that will provide additional shading, raised planters, and seat walls for comfortable outdoor seating. The first park in the U.S. to be awarded the LEED® Silver rating in 2005, the Pico Branch Library will seek a platinum rating from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Visit the Pico Branch website  
[smpl.org/picobranch.aspx](http://smpl.org/picobranch.aspx)

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. Why are we building a new branch of the Santa Monica Public Library?

Since the 1983 Pico Neighborhood Community Plan, the community has expressed a desire for a neighborhood library. Focus group meetings held in September 2008 verified the value of a library facility and programs for the Pico neighborhood, with a preference for the Virginia Avenue Park location. In May 2009, the City Council allocated Redevelopment funds to construct the branch in the park. Between September 2010 and April 2011, five community workshops were held for the public to provide input on the new branch library.

## 2. Why is this library being built in the park?

Several factors influenced the decision. The combination of limited City funds, the original restrictions of Redevelopment funding, and the lack of affordable private property for sale favored the City-owned park site. It was also felt that the services offered by a branch library would work well with park programs.

## 3. What will happen to the Fairview Branch?

Following the opening of the Pico Branch Library, the Fairview Branch Library will *temporarily* close for interior renovations starting on Monday, June 30, 2014 through December 2014. Similar to the improvements at the Montana Avenue Branch in 2012 and the Ocean Park Branch in 2011, the Fairview Branch will get new: carpet and paint, central air conditioning, improved interior lighting, adult book and media shelving, service desk, book displays, more self check stations, reconfigured adult computer area and more.

## 4. How is the new branch being paid for?

The City Council had originally earmarked Redevelopment money for this project from the 1994 Earthquake recovery zone. When Santa Monica's Redevelopment Agency was dissolved as part of a statewide move, the City designated \$10.8 million from general and capital improvement funds for this priority project. Project costs include branch library construction and opening costs, equipment, fixtures, furnishings, and the opening day collection of new library materials. Other associated costs and contingencies include design and construction management fees, contingencies for hazardous materials and unforeseen conditions, specialty inspections (geotechnical, material testing, waterproofing and commissioning for LEED certification), and utilities connections.

## 5. How will additional parking demand be resolved?

A study showed that existing parking is sufficient for both park and library uses except during Saturday morning's Farmers Market. It is assumed that many patrons of the new branch library will be drawn from the same community that currently utilizes Virginia Avenue Park and the market. Additional bicycle racks have been installed; and a bike valet will be added to the Farmers Market on Saturdays.

**For more information,** visit the Pico Branch website [smpl.org/picobranch.aspx](http://smpl.org/picobranch.aspx)

Pico Branch Project Timeline		Project Team
GRAND OPENING CEREMONY (11 AM–4 PM)	June 28, 2014	Architect   Koning Eizenberg Architecture  Landscape Architects   Spurlock Poirier  Signage   Newsom Design    Contractor   R.C. Construction Services  Construction Management   Swinerton  LEED Consultant   Brightworks
"SOFT" OPENING OF PICO BRANCH LIBRARY	April 24, 2014	
GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY	Aug. 15, 2012	
CONSTRUCTION START	summer 2012	
DESIGN, DOCUMENTATION & APPROVALS	2011-2012	
COMMUNITY SURVEY, WORKSHOPS, MEETINGS ON SITING AND PROGRAMMING	fall 2010-spring 2011	
CITY COUNCIL ACTION - KONING EIZENBERG CONTRACT APPROVED	Jan. 26, 2010	
DESIGN TEAMS INTERVIEWED - KONING EIZENBERG ARCHITECTURE SELECTED	Nov. 17, 2009	
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN SERVICES FOR PICO BRANCH	Oct. 2009	
CITY COUNCIL ACTION - REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY FUNDS DESIGNATED FOR PICO BRANCH	June 10, 2009	
COMMUNITY INPUT - FOCUS GROUP, COMMUNITY WORKSHOP, BOARDS & COMMISSIONS PRESENTATIONS ON PICO AREA LIBRARY SERVICE AND SITING	Sept. 2008 - March 2009	