



**Vestavia Hills
City Council Agenda
September 9, 2026
3:00 PM**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Budget Presentations
4. Other Discussions
5. Citizen Comment
6. Time of Adjournment

PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES

The following procedures shall be followed for every public hearing of the City Council:

- All comments shall be limited to **3 minutes**. A countdown clock will be provided on the video screens.
- Do not duplicate comments made by previous speakers. For example, if traffic is mentioned as an issue, do not readdress that issue.
- All comments shall be directed to the Mayor and/or presiding officer. Do not address the audience or the applicant.

Each speaker shall identify himself, including full name and address

SPECIAL NOTICE CONCERNING CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

If you prefer not to attend a City Council meeting or work session in person, you may participate remotely:

- **Videoconference:** To participate by videoconference, you may access the meeting via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5539517181>. When the Zoom.us window opens in your browser, click "Allow" to be placed in a virtual "waiting room." The host will open the meeting and allow all participants to join the meeting at that time. All participants will be automatically muted upon entrance to the meeting. If you wish to speak during time(s) identified for public input, activate the "video" feature and unmute yourself by toggling the mute button. When the Mayor recognizes you and gives you the floor, state your name and address for the record and then you may address the Council. Some useful Zoom functions include: microphone Mute/Unmute; Start/Stop Video; and View Participants – opens a pop-out screen that includes the "Raise Hand" icon that you may use to raise a virtual hand.
- **Teleconference:** To participate by telephone, dial 312.626.6799 and enter the meeting ID: 5539517181. All participants will be automatically muted upon entrance to the meeting. If you wish to speak during time(s) identified for public input, unmute yourself by pressing *6 on your keypad. Then state your name and wait for the Mayor to recognize you. When the Mayor recognizes you and gives you the floor, state your name and address for the record and then address the Council.

Meetings may be recorded. By participating in the meeting, you are consenting to be recorded.

"Zoom-bombing." Zoom-bombing is a cyber-crime and is punishable by law. In the event of an attendee intruding into any City of Vestavia Hills Zoom meeting, the online broadcast will be terminated immediately. Council and/or board members may be readmitted but online attendees will not. Although Zoom-bombing is not a frequent occurrence, those wishing to make public comment should attend the meeting in person.

August 27, 2026

Council Member Kimberly Cook
City of Vestavia Hills
1032 Montgomery Highway
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

RE: Eastside/Sicard Hollow Library Funding and the Proposed \$9 Million Turf Field Allocation

Dear Council Member Cook,

I am writing to you as a resident of Vestavia Hills (although, as you know, I am a member of the Council and Mayor-appointed Vestavia Hills Library in the Forest Board of Trustees). I am concerned about the potential impact of the proposed \$9 million turf field allocation on previously contemplated funding for an Eastside library.

I am not asking for a written response — I want my concerns and questions on the record as the Council considers this allocation. This city has been my home for nearly a decade now, and I care about it enough to want to see it get this decision right.

Background

The Eastside library has been an established City capital priority. Plans for a library/community space at the Sicard Hollow Athletic Complex (SHAC) site included approximately \$7 million in projected City funding, supplemented by private fundraising. The FY 2026 budget included \$330,000 for pre-construction work related to the library, along with police and city maintenance facilities. In January 2026, the current Council voted 4-1 to authorize the first phase of a feasibility design and cost study with Williams Blackstock Architects; that study was subsequently put on hold.

And now I'm learning that \$9 million has been directed to new turf fields, with no requirement for matching funds from the Parks and Recreation Board. This move appears to significantly limit future funding opportunities for a library, and I'm afraid it would eliminate the possibility altogether. That prospect genuinely troubles me, both as a Trustee who has watched the Library Board and the Foundation invest real time and hope in this project, and as a neighbor who wants to see Liberty Park and Cahaba Heights families have what other parts of our city already enjoy.

Questions

On the funding itself:

- What is the current status of the previously contemplated Eastside/Sicard Hollow library funding?
- What formal Council action changed or redirected those funds? And has the City Attorney confirmed there are no legal restrictions on redirecting them?
- Is the proposed \$9 million for the turf project new funding, or does any portion represent funds previously designated for the Eastside library?

- Why commit a full \$9 million to the turf project before completing a meaningful library design and cost study and obtaining additional public input? Why not scale back the turf budget to leave room for both a library and re-turfing?

On comparative impact:

- How many residents will actively and regularly use the turf fields, compared to the projected user base for a library serving the same area — please consider the number of players versus patrons, and hours of use for each.
- Has the full lifecycle cost of synthetic turf — including maintenance and replacement over 10 to 20 years — been factored into the budget impact of this decision?

On process and equity:

- Why is a matching-funds requirement being proposed for the library but not for the turf project? Why treat two capital projects differently?
- Has the community been formally surveyed or given a structured opportunity to weigh in on this specific reallocation before a vote is taken?
- If the reallocation is approved, what is the committed funding pathway and timeline for the library — or is it deferred indefinitely?

Why This Matters to Me

Libraries are essential civic infrastructure — they support education, child development, lifelong learning, and community connection. I've seen, through my work on the Library Board and as a library patron, how much our library means to the families, students, and seniors who use it week after week. I regularly participate in the library's outreach efforts in Liberty Park and Cahaba Heights, and I've seen firsthand, in the turnout and the sheer joy, how eager and grateful these residents are for this thoughtful and directed library programming.

Libraries are not a discretionary amenity, and access to them should extend to all parts of Vestavia Hills, not concentrate west of Highway 280. Liberty Park and Cahaba Heights residents currently have neither a branch library nor any public indoor community space. An Eastside library would be a valuable "third place" for these residents — a vital social space separate from the two usual environments of home ("first place") and workplace ("second place"). Just as importantly, it would serve Vestavia Hills residents of all ages, from babies to seniors. Outdoor recreation, however valuable, does not meet that need.

Personally, I wouldn't be in this position of writing to you at all if not for a library. As a child growing up in south Alabama with very little means, my small, local library was my way into a wider world and a better life. I know the value of a library goes far beyond the books it holds.

Quality of life for a city requires balance: outdoor recreation, libraries, fine arts spaces, and indoor community gathering places all serve residents across different life stages. Capital funding should reflect that range rather than concentrating in a single category. When two projects are equally valuable to the community, funding should be allocated — and each project sized — according to what the budget can support and what can realistically be raised through private philanthropy or grants, not by fully funding one and indefinitely deferring the other.

Requests

I respectfully request that the Council:

1. Delay a specific funding allocation for the turf project until the community has been properly informed of and engaged on both options. The public cannot meaningfully weigh in on the library given that the concept has not yet been developed, surveyed, or opened for input.
2. Require the turf project to obtain matching Park Board funding to make up the difference between cost and funding. This has already been suggested for the library project, and the Foundation had already begun working on fundraising toward it — why not ask the same of the turf project?
3. Allow more time to explore library design and cost options before committing the full \$9 million to turf. Direct that the library study move forward as a *design and cost study* — not a general feasibility study.
4. Budget funding for a library study and, by Council resolution, define its focus and timing: ideally, a library guided by the Library Board, not a generic community building, and located at the original SHAC site rather than an alternative site.
5. Direct that public input be gathered on what features residents want in a library, with particular emphasis on the residents who live closest to the proposed site — Liberty Park and Cahaba Heights.

If I'm not mistaken, the City's bi-annual survey goes out in November, with results returned in January. I think it would be a good idea to include a question assessing interest in these two competing projects at Liberty Park — library or turf fields. Strategic planning follows in January or February, I believe, and that window seems like the right time to make final decisions on funding allocation between these two projects, once the Council and the community have the information needed to evaluate them on comparable terms.

I know Council members are weighing many priorities at once, and I appreciate the time and care that goes into these decisions. I simply want to make sure the library isn't quietly set aside in the process. Thank you for your time and consideration. And thank you, also, for your support of our library. I sincerely enjoy working with you in your role as Council liaison.

Respectfully,

Susan Swagler

Resident, Vestavia Hills
Member, Vestavia Hills Library in the Forest Board of Trustees

Friday, September 4, 2026

Councilor Kimberly B. Cook
Place No. 2
City of Vestavia Hills
1032 Montgomery Highway
Vestavia Hills, Alabama 35216

Subject: September 9 Council Work Session and Meeting Request re Eastside/Sicard Hollow
Library Funding and the Proposed \$9 Million Turf Field Allocation

Dear Councilor Cook,

I am writing as a resident and parent in this community and as Vice Chair of the Vestavia Hills Library in the Forest, Board of Trustees.

I come to you with one request: I respectfully ask that, before approving or committing the proposed \$9 million turf-field allocation, the Council allow the Eastside library design and cost study to proceed to completion and publicly review its findings before making a decision that could materially constrain the City's capital capacity to pursue the library project. I am simply asking for the information this community should have before a decision of this magnitude is made.

Although I did not grow up in Vestavia Hills proper, this community has always been part of my story. My brother and I attended Cahaba Heights Elementary and the former Gresham Middle School, both campuses now part of the Vestavia City Schools system. Our classmates and we grew up in neighborhoods that were adjacent to or later annexed to Vestavia, and many are now raising their children here, as am I. Our parents took us to libraries all over Jefferson County, because they believed curiosity, equal access to knowledge, and service to the community are the foundation for meaningful lives and thriving communities.

My husband and I passed those values to our daughter, who has truly grown up at the Library in the Forest. She has discovered her love of music, robotics, astronomy, and Rick Riordan's books—not just from us, our educational excursions, or her school, but from books she chose herself from these shelves. She enjoys attending library programs and recently started serving on the Teen Advisory Board. She also plays sports, most recently Vestavia girls' flag football. And we actively encourage all of this, because we believe that a city that values quality-of-life amenities like libraries can also value sports and other forms of recreation. These priorities do not have to be in competition.

Vestavia Hills has one of the most highly educated populations in Alabama, with approximately 65% of adults holding a bachelor's degree or higher (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020–2024). More than 91% of Liberty Park's working residents are employed in professional or administrative roles, with a median household income of

approximately \$117,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019–2023, as reported in Liberty Park demographic data). From young families to retirees, Vestavia families in Cahaba Heights, Liberty Park and other Eastside areas use libraries, support libraries, and donate to libraries. Yet families on the Eastside currently drive more than 15 minutes under normal traffic conditions to reach one.

A library design and cost study is not a vague exercise. It is a structured process that produces the factual information decision-makers need before committing public funds. It begins with a community needs assessment, documenting who would use the facility, how often, and for what purposes. It then moves through a building program that translates those needs into specific spaces and square footage, a conceptual design that tests the program against the SHAC site, and a preliminary cost estimate paired with a funding analysis identifying the City's share, what the Foundation can raise privately, and what grants may be available. The purpose of this study is to give the City the information needed to decide how to proceed and provide transparency to residents.

The \$13 million Library in the Forest project also demonstrates what this community can accomplish through a combination of public and private investment. The City issued a \$4 million challenge grant to match private gifts dollar-for-dollar, and the Library Foundation ultimately raised approximately \$4 million through community contributions, including many individual donations and in-kind support.

The Foundation, the Trustees, the Friends and all of the library's associated organizations are confident in our ability to engage the community. The City has a demonstrated model for leveraging public dollars with private community investment. Give the Eastside project the same opportunity by completing the study first.

Before the FY2027 budget is finalized, I have two questions, as I believe this Council values the trust that transparency builds.

First, this Council voted 4 to 1 on January 21, 2026, to authorize the first phase of an Eastside library feasibility study with Williams Blackstock Architects. The City's FY2026 budget had appropriated \$330,000 for pre-construction work that specifically included the Eastside library at Sicard Hollow. The City's own current projects page still lists the Library and Community Center as an active project with a proposed FY2027 commencement ([City of Vestavia Hills Projects page](#)). What formal Council action changed course, and when?

Second, I understand the need to update the turf fields. Synthetic turf, however, is not a one-time expenditure. Research and independent technical analysis place synthetic turf carpet life at approximately 8 to 12 years. Annual maintenance, infill replenishment, grooming, repairs, eventual resurfacing or replacement, and disposal mean the true 20-year cost of this project is likely materially higher than \$9 million.

What is the City's anticipated financial obligation in Years 8 and 10? Were alternative funding arrangements evaluated, and could the turf project require matching funds from the Park Board or private sources, as has been proposed for the library?

I love this Library. I want every resident of Vestavia Hills, including those who live in its easternmost corridor, to have the same relationship with a library that my daughter has had with ours. A branch tailored to the people it will serve, guided by the Library Board, and located on the SHAC property is the next logical chapter of something this city has already built beautifully.

Thank you for your time, your service to the community, and the careful deliberation you bring to decisions like this one.

Respectfully yours,

April M. Jackson MacLennan
Resident and Parent
1820 Post Oak Road
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

Vice Chair, Board of Trustees
Vestavia Hills Library in the Forest

From: [Kimberly Cook](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Umang Patel](#)
Subject: Re: [External] Liberty Park Library
Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2026 10:38:28 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Natalie,

Thank you for making this public comment. I agree with all your points and will be advocating for completing the library design and budget analysis before any decision is made to commit \$9 million for the turf fields.

I will make sure this is entered into the public record, by copy of this email to the City Clerk.

Best,
Kimberly



KIMBERLY B. COOK
Councilor | City of Vestavia Hills
P 205.807.0503 | vhal.org
1032 Montgomery Hwy
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2026 7:47 PM
To: Ashley Curry <acurry@vhal.org>; Dennis Weaver <dweaver@vhal.org>; Kimberly Cook <kcook@vhal.org>; Michael Vercher <mvercher@vhal.org>; Ali Pilcher <apilcher@vhal.org>; Jeff Downes <jdownes@vhal.org>; Cinnamon McCulley <cmcculley@vhal.org>
Subject: [External] Liberty Park Library

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council,

As you prepare to vote on the city budget on September 9, I am requesting clear answers about the proposed library and community space in Liberty Park. Please also enter this email in its entirety into the public record for the September 9 City Council meeting.

In January, the City Council approved a study of this project. Liberty Park residents therefore expected the city to evaluate it seriously and identify a path forward. Eight months later, we deserve

an update.

Please address the following questions:

- What is the current status and outcome of the study?
- What actions has the city taken since its approval?
- Is a Liberty Park library and community space still a city priority?
- If so, what is the specific plan and realistic timeline?
- If not, what changed, and why?

These answers matter as the budget vote establishes the city's priorities.

A library is more than a building or amenity. It provides children with access to books, technology, programs, and a safe place to learn; gives families a place to gather; and strengthens community connections. For my family, this space would meaningfully improve our quality of life. For Liberty Park, it would be a lasting investment serving residents across generations.

Liberty Park is a significant and growing part of the city. We deserve to know why a project important enough to warrant an approved study in January now appears to have lost momentum. I am asking not only whether you support the concept, but what you are prepared to do to move it forward. I would also appreciate each council member's perspective on whether this project should remain a city priority.

The September 9 budget vote will reflect what the city chooses to prioritize. Those priorities, and your actions regarding this project, will influence how I evaluate city leadership and vote going forward.

Please provide Liberty Park residents with a clear update, plan, and timeline.

Thank you for your service and consideration. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Natalie & Irving Meisler
Liberty Park Resident

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kimberly Cook](#)
To: [Umang Patel](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] Request for library at LP
Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2026 10:46:21 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Please enter this into the public record.



KIMBERLY B. COOK
Councilor | City of Vestavia Hills
P 205.807.0503 | vhal.org
1032 Montgomery Hwy
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

From: NoraGhazal [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2026 9:55 PM
To: Ashley Curry <acurry@vhal.org>; Kimberly Cook <kcook@vhal.org>; rwesver@vhal.org <rwesver@vhal.org>; Michael Vercher <mvercher@vhal.org>; Cinnamon McCulley <cmcculley@vhal.org>; Jeff Downes <jdownes@vhal.org>
Cc: drmohdimam@gmail.com [REDACTED]
Subject: [External] Request for library at LP

Dear Mayor Curry and Members of the Vestavia Hills City Council

I am writing as a Liberty Park resident to express my strong support for a library and community space in Liberty Park, and I respectfully ask that this email be entered into the public record in connection with the September 9 City Council meeting and budget discussions.

I would also appreciate some clarification regarding the library/community space study that was approved in January. What became of that study and what is the current plan and timeline for a Liberty Park library or community space?

Having a library here is a dream for many of us because it would represent so much more than simply adding another building to Liberty Park. It would be an investment in the intellectual, social, and civic life of our

community.

As our area continues to grow, we are seeing more banks, offices, and commercial buildings. These are important institutions, of course, but they do not necessarily create the sense of belonging and community that many families are looking for. A library would offer something very different. It would be a place where people could gather, learn, read, study, think, connect, and feel more rooted in the place they call home.

With the elementary and middle schools nearby, a library would be a natural extension of the educational community that already exists here. It could serve children, teenagers, families, teachers, and older residents alike. It could provide quiet study space, programming, meeting space, access to resources, and simply a place where people can spend time together in a meaningful way.

As a parent, I feel the absence of such a space very personally. We often have to drive outside of Liberty Park to find places where our children can browse books, study, explore ideas, or simply sit quietly and read. I would love for my children to have a place here where they could wander through the shelves, disappear into a book, become absorbed in their own thoughts, and continue developing their curiosity and intellect.

I also think this is about what kind of community we want Liberty Park to become. Communities are shaped not only by the businesses and financial institutions they attract, but also by the spaces they create for people to learn, connect, and grow. A library says that education matters, curiosity matters, young people matter, and community life matters.

I understand that public projects require difficult decisions about funding and priorities. But I truly believe a library and community space would pay dividends for years to come in quality of life, educational opportunity, community engagement, and the kind of place Liberty Park becomes as it continues to grow.

Please consider maintaining this project as a priority and providing residents with a clear update on the study, the current plan, and the anticipated timeline.

Thank you for your service and for considering the perspectives of Liberty Park residents.

Sincerely,
Dr Noor Ghazal Aswad and Dr Mohamad Imam
Liberty Park Resident

From: [Kimberly Cook](#)
To: [Umang Patel](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] Liberty Park Library
Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2026 10:43:45 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Please add this to the public record for consideration of our budget.



KIMBERLY B. COOK
Councilor | City of Vestavia Hills
P 205.807.0503 | vhal.org
1032 Montgomery Hwy
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

From: Jennie Borland <jennie.borland@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2026 8:53 PM
To: Ashley Curry <acurry@vhal.org>; Dennis Weaver <dweaver@vhal.org>; Kimberly Cook <kcook@vhal.org>; Michael Vercher <mvercher@vhal.org>; Ali Pilcher <apilcher@vhal.org>; Jeff Downes <jdownes@vhal.org>; Cinnamon McCulley <cmcculley@vhal.org>
Subject: [External] Liberty Park Library

Hello,

As the City Council will meet On Sept 9 to vote on the budget, I wanted to email to ask about our Liberty Park library/community space approved in January. What is the plan and timeline for a Liberty Park library/community space? Why has this priority appeared to change?

I have 4th graders at VHELP, 9-year-old twins who LOVE the public library. My mom retired from Vestavia Elementary Central as the school librarian, and before that served as librarian at the Botanical Gardens library and Hoover Public Library. Raised by a librarian, I was constantly surrounded by countless books, the love of reading, and knowing the importance of a library to a community.

Growing up in Vestavia, I remember visiting the Library when it was in the old Civic Center. I remember being so excited when the "new" (Richard Scrushy) VH Library opened on Highway 31. We love the Library In the Forest, and we are so proud Vestavia has this asset. I have always been a library kid, and I am proud to be raising library kids. We join the summer reading program each year, and my kids look forward to youth and other community events (cardboard box kingdom, Cricut sticker making, and 3D printing tutorials were hits for my kids this past summer!) Although we love the Library in the Forest, it would be such a wonderful addition to LP to have our own library and community gathering space. There is currently no space like that in LP, other than the

schools. In the summers and after school hours, this would be such an invaluable space for families.

I would ask that my email be entered into the public record, and please let me know if you need any further information.

Jennie Borland
1124 Brayfield Crest Drive
Vestavia Hills, AL 35242

From: [Kimberly Cook](#)
To: [Umang Patel](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] City Council meeting Sept 9
Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2026 10:51:32 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Please enter this into the public record.



KIMBERLY B. COOK
Councilor | City of Vestavia Hills
P 205.807.0503 | vhal.org
1032 Montgomery Hwy
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

From: Katie Rhodes <kcrrhodes@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2026 10:09 PM
To: Ashley Curry <acurry@vhal.org>; Dennis Weaver <dweaver@vhal.org>; Kimberly Cook <kcook@vhal.org>; Ali Pilcher <apilcher@vhal.org>; Jeff Downes <jdownes@vhal.org>; Cinnamon McCulley <cmcculley@vhal.org>
Subject: [External] City Council meeting Sept 9

Dear City Leadership,

I am a resident of Vestavia Hills. I currently reside in Liberty Park with my husband and three children who all attend VH city schools. I have a background in education and a passion for reading. I am especially passionate about reading to children from birth and exposing them to as many books as possible throughout their formative years. Many studies have been done to support reading to babies as vital to their development, and I believe that teaching a child to read is one of the greatest gifts you can offer them. Being able to read opens them up to millions of adventures and worlds beyond their own. Reading other people's stories invites children to empathize with others who live differently than them.

I could go on...but you likely already know how valuable reading is. That's why you've been discussing adding a new library to the Liberty Park/Cahaba Hills area of Vestavia Hills. I'll admit, I was very excited when I heard that the community space project had been approved in January. What a benefit to our community! Liberty Pharmacy has graciously provided a place for us to pick up and turn in books for many years. My family takes advantage of this service frequently. But to have a full library within a few minutes of our house would be a dream come true! Not only can we access more books, but having a safe space for children and youth programming and tutoring, as well as adult clubs and activities would be invaluable. The fact that a pedestrian tunnel already exists linking the Liberty Park schools to the proposed library side of Sicard Hollow is the icing on the

cake!

Imagine my disappointment when I started hearing grumblings that the library project may be delayed or even eliminated from the community space project! I spoke with a representative one day from the Library in the Forest who confirmed that there was less enthusiasm from the City to continue the project, that emphasis and the budget were being prioritized toward the police substation and away from the library.

I am not reaching out to argue that a police substation is not necessary. It would be nice to not have to drive 35 minutes (one way) to file a police report, as I had to do last week when my vehicle was involved in a hit-and-run. I am simply asking that you reconsider diverting taxpayer dollars away from the library, as well. In Liberty Park, we pay the same taxes as those who live in Vestavia Proper and we deserve the same amenities offered to those residents, including a public library.

Please consider our children and our community when you vote on the budget this Wednesday. And please enter this email into the public record.

I sincerely appreciate your time and consideration,
Katie Rhodes

From: [Kimberly Cook](#)
To: [Umang Patel](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] Budget / priority question
Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2026 11:15:44 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Please add this to the public record.



KIMBERLY B. COOK
Councilor | City of Vestavia Hills
P 205.807.0503 | vhal.org
1032 Montgomery Hwy
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

From: Meg Burton <meg.w.burton@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 8, 2026 8:28 AM
To: Ashley Curry <acurry@vhal.org>; Dennis Weaver <dweaver@vhal.org>; Kimberly Cook <kcook@vhal.org>; Michael Vercher <mvercher@vhal.org>; Ali Pilcher <apilcher@vhal.org>; Jeff Downes <jdownes@vhal.org>; Cinnamon McCulley <cmcculley@vhal.org>
Subject: [External] Budget / priority question

Hi city leadership,

I'm reaching out to ask about next steps regarding the construction of a library branch in Liberty Park. I understand this needs to be balanced with other city priorities. Given that it was part of the strategic plan and that work and public money have already gone into early planning steps, I'm wondering if you can provide updated information on the general timeline and plan. It's natural that we need to adapt plans to deal with crisis situations and changing circumstances, but transparent information would be appreciated by the community and help engaged community members support progress toward this long-term goal.

I'm a Vestavia resident who frequently uses our wonderful library for myself and my kids. It's such an incredibly helpful resource and I want that for others in our city. I appreciate your service and leadership for our community.

Mary M. ("Meg") Burton
2201 Pine Crest Lane
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

--

Meg W. Burton, APR
[205-470-7976](tel:205-470-7976)
meg.w.burton@gmail.com

From: [Kimberly Cook](#)
To: [Umang Patel](#)
Subject: Fw: Prioritizing East Side Library in FY 2027 Budget
Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2026 11:27:30 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Please add to the public record.



KIMBERLY B. COOK
Councilor | City of Vestavia Hills
P 205.807.0503 | vhal.org
1032 Montgomery Hwy
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

From: E L <myejl@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2026 4:08 PM
To: Ashley Curry <acurry@vhal.org>; Dennis Weaver <dweaver@vhal.org>; Kimberly Cook <kcook@vhal.org>; Michael Vercher <mvercher@vhal.org>; Ali Pilcher <apilcher@vhal.org>; Jeff Downes <jdownes@vhal.org>; Cinnamon McCulley <cmcculley@vhal.org>
Cc: Ann Hamiter <ann_hamiter@ucbi.com>; Taneisha Tucker <taneisha.tucker@vestavialibrary.org>
Subject: [External] Prioritizing East Side Library in FY 2027 Budget

Dear Mayor Curry and City Councilors:

As a resident of Liberty Park, Vice President of the Vestavia Hills Library Foundation, Paraprofessional at Dolly Ridge Elementary and parent, I was surprised and concerned to see that the City's proposed FY 2027 Budget does not include any funding of the long-discussed, long-prioritized and long-needed Cahaba Heights/Liberty Park Library branch. Indeed, the City had previously approved funding toward a fundraising consultant and moving forward with a planned feasibility study. What has changed? I understand the study was paused to pursue a possible public-private Library proposal, but that proposal turned out to be unsuitable. The next obvious step is resuming the feasibility study or even moving right to planning the new Library branch. To remove the project from the Budget entirely is ill-advised and counter to the widespread public support and public officials' previous comments about proceeding with the new branch.

Liberty Park is growing in all demographics represented: families with children, empty-nesters and seniors. What hasn't grown is the infrastructure needed to support this growing part of Vestavia and to sustain the high quality of life and community engagement for which the City is rightly known. Recreation is important, and the City's many ballfields, playing courts, parks and water features attest to the City's strong support for athletics and recreation.

A modern Library, which is far more than just books on shelves, is equally important and is more widely used by all of Vestavia at all times of the year. Unlike an athletic field during a playing season, a new Library branch would engage Vestavians of all ages and stages of life throughout the year: babies and young children with their parents and caregivers, students in all grades, residents attending events and programs, parents and grandparents. During the summer, when our excellent schools and their libraries are closed, having a nearby Library is especially important for those in Cahaba Heights and Liberty Park.

I understand the need for prudent fiscal management. That said, a new Library Branch has long been in the City's strategic planning and budget priorities; it is not a spur of the moment or whimsical "want." The need and support for such Branch has only grown and further delay is inexplicable. I ask that a new east side Library Branch be restored as a budget priority in this and upcoming fiscal years so that this important project can proceed. I also ask that my comments above be included in the Council record.

Respectfully,

Emily Lawrence
4217 Paxton Place
Vestavia, AL 35242

From: [Kimberly Cook](#)
To: [Umang Patel](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] Liberty Park Library
Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2026 1:33:55 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Please add to the public record.



KIMBERLY B. COOK
Councilor | City of Vestavia Hills
P 205.807.0503 | vhal.org
1032 Montgomery Hwy
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

From: Michelle Esguerra <mrsesguerra@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 8, 2026 1:00 PM
To: Ashley Curry <acurry@vhal.org>; Dennis Weaver <dweaver@vhal.org>; Kimberly Cook <kcook@vhal.org>; Michael Vercher <mvercher@vhal.org>; Ali Pilcher <apilcher@vhal.org>; Jeff Downes <jdownes@vhal.org>; Cinnamon McCulley <cmcculley@vhal.org>
Subject: [External] Liberty Park Library

Dear city officials

The subject of the proposed library for Liberty park has come up in local discussion forums again this weekend.

I would like to give our opinion for my family of six. While my 4 kids are not little anymore and would not participate in the kids events or story time we would absolutely take advantage of a library to study, work and meet as a community. We are tired of downloading books from Libby. We would much rather browse in person. It is exhausting driving over and back to the High School for those of us so far away and are reluctant to drive over and back again for the library. Picking up books in the pharmacy is no fun either.

We can only dream of a teen hangout where they are surrounded by books! One that they can walk or bike to. Study groups and tutoring space would be great for our amazing students!

I'm looking forward to retirement and would love to join a local book club to meet there. Imagine the community spirit we could foster there!

You only need to look at the amount and caliber of parent volunteers at vhelp and lpms to

know that the support and help the residents could offer this new facility would be enviable.

Let's build more libraries and less data centers! The future of the next generation would be so much more enhanced if we do.

Thanks for listening.

Michelle Esguerra
7109 Lake Run Circle

From: [Jeff Downes](#)
To: [Umang Patel](#)
Subject: Fwd: [External] East Side Vestavia Hills Library Comments
Date: Saturday, September 5, 2026 6:10:36 AM

FYI and file

JEFF DOWNES
Vestavia Hills City Manager
P 205 978 0195 | [vhal.org](#)
Vestavia Hills

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: djm <djm3031@gmail.com>
Date: September 4, 2026 at 9:22:17 PM CDT
To: Ashley Curry <acurry@vhal.org>, Dennis Weaver <dweaver@vhal.org>, Kimberly Cook <kcook@vhal.org>, Michael Vercher <mvercher@vhal.org>, Ali Pilcher <apilcher@vhal.org>, Jeff Downes <jdownes@vhal.org>, Cinnamon McCulley <cmcculley@vhal.org>, Ann Hamiter <ann_hamiter@ucbi.com>, Elise Bodenheimer - FoL VHL <elisebod@aol.com>, Leigh <klwmlvn@gmail.com>, VHL_Taneisha Tucker <Taneisha.Tucker@vestavialibrary.org>, VHL_Todd Richardson <todd.richardson@vestavialibrary.org>
Subject: [External] East Side Vestavia Hills Library Comments

Councilors,

Rather than go over the numerous budget related questions, which you no doubt will be asked, I've boiled my comments down to data I've gleaned as relates to the East Side Library budgeting issue(s).

<u>Libraries (City and Library #)</u>	<u>Population</u> (2026 Metro)	<u>Residents/Library</u>
- Houston, TX 17	7,900,000	464,700
- Austin, TX 15	1,002,000	66,800
- Myrtle Beach, SC 10	449,000	44,900
- Fredericksburg, TX 1	12,000	12,000
- Key West, FL 2	24,800	12,400
- Hoover, AL 1	92,600	92,600
- Vestavia, AL 1	38,000	38,000
- Homewood, AL 1	28,000	28,000

As can be seen by the above data, the number of Libraries, and residents per Library varies but my wife Leigh and I have

been to all of those listed above.

Although the above is arguably rough census data, probably the closest spread to Vestavia, by residents per Library, would be Myrtle Beach, SC (which has 6,900 more residents).

For perspective, the Birmingham metro area (including Homewood) has 18 Libraries and a population of 959,000. This translates to 53,280 residents per Library.

Starkly, Hoover metro area has a high number of residents per their single Library (92,600), but it pales in comparison to Houston, TX (464,700 per).

In summary, Vestavia needs an “East Side” Library because the annexed Liberty Park/Cahaba Heights area is nearly the physical size of the “old” Vestavia Hills. The residents per Library count supports this position, as does the educational value of our future.

Dave Melvin

VHL Friends & Foundation

Treasurer

From: [Kimberly Cook](#)
To: [Umang Patel](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] Revisiting the Liberty Park Community Library Project
Date: Wednesday, September 9, 2026 7:31:56 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Please add to the public record.



KIMBERLY B. COOK
Councilor | City of Vestavia Hills
P 205.807.0503 | vhal.org
1032 Montgomery Hwy
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

From: Missy Sun <missysun315@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2026 1:07 PM
To: Ashley Curry <acurry@vhal.org>; Dennis Weaver <dweaver@vhal.org>; Kimberly Cook <kcook@vhal.org>; Michael Vercher <mvercher@vhal.org>; Ali Pilcher <apilcher@vhal.org>; Jeff Downes <jdownes@vhal.org>; Cinnamon McCulley <cmcculley@vhal.org>
Cc: Mary Katherine Bartlett <marykbartlett@gmail.com>
Subject: [External] Revisiting the Liberty Park Community Library Project

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to ask that the City Council revisit the discussion surrounding a community library serving Liberty Park and provide clarity regarding the status of this project.

At one point, a feasibility study for a Liberty Park library was approved, yet to my understanding, that study was never completed. I would appreciate knowing why the study did not move forward and why plans for a library serving Liberty Park no longer appear to be part of the current discussion.

This is particularly difficult to understand because the need for expanded library access in this part of Vestavia Hills is not new. In fact, the City's 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan specifically identified potential library branches in Liberty Park and Cahaba Heights as a long-term issue to be addressed through a facilities plan.

For me, this is about much more than constructing another public building. It is about creating an educational and community resource that our children and families can access close to home.

Access matters.

Vestavia Hills currently has one central public library, the Library in the Forest, located at 1221 Montgomery Highway. For Liberty Park families, getting there means traveling out of our immediate community and across some of the area's busiest corridors.

This concern has already been recognized by library leadership. Earlier this year, the president of the Vestavia Hills Library Board of Trustees told the City Council that Liberty Park and Cahaba Heights fall outside a reasonable 15-minute drive to the Library in the Forest, particularly during peak traffic. She described that distance as a “real access barrier.”

Other public libraries, such as Hoover and O’Neal Library in Mountain Brook, also require Liberty Park residents to leave their community. While our Jefferson County library card provides access throughout the cooperative system, access on paper is not the same as convenient, regular access for a child or family.

The popularity of library programming also demonstrates that these facilities are about much more than books. In fiscal year 2025, the Library in the Forest reportedly offered 855 programs attended by 20,737 people. Even more telling, just 16 outreach programs in Cahaba Heights and Liberty Park attracted 3,325 attendees. That level of participation suggests there is meaningful demand for library programming on this side of our city.

A community library gives families access to summer reading programs, book clubs, story times, educational activities, tutoring, technology and, perhaps most importantly, a place where children are encouraged to continue learning outside of school.

I see the impact of that environment firsthand every day in my role as a library aide at Vestavia Hills Elementary Liberty Park.

Young readers are genuinely excited when they enter the library. I see children eager to find a new book, discover a new series, learn about something that interests them, and talk about what they are reading. A library gives reading an identity beyond an assignment—it can make reading something children associate with discovery, independence and enjoyment.

I believe we have an opportunity to extend that excitement beyond the school day and throughout the year.

Imagine a Liberty Park community library where an elementary student participates in a reading program, a middle school student meets friends for a book club, a high school student has a quiet place to study, a preschooler attends story time, and families gather for educational and community events.

That is not simply a building filled with books. It is educational infrastructure.

It is also important to recognize that Liberty Park’s school libraries cannot fill the role of a public library. A community library provides access in the evenings, on weekends, during school breaks and throughout the year—and serves everyone from preschool children to senior adults.

Vestavia Hills has already demonstrated what an exceptional public library can contribute to a community through the Library in the Forest. The question I hope we will consider is whether families on the Liberty Park side of our city should have more practical access to those same opportunities.

I respectfully ask the Council to provide information regarding:

- What happened to the previously approved feasibility study concerning a library serving Liberty Park?
- Why was the study not completed?
- Why is the project no longer being actively discussed?
- What would be required for the City to reconsider the feasibility study and objectively evaluate the current need for a library serving Liberty Park?

I recognize that a project of this size requires careful consideration of cost, location, staffing and long-term operating expenses. I am not suggesting those concerns should be ignored. I am asking that the need be fully evaluated.

A feasibility study does not obligate the City to build a library. It gives our leaders and

residents the information necessary to determine whether we should.

More than two decades ago, Vestavia Hills' own Comprehensive Plan identified the possibility of a Liberty Park library branch as something worthy of future consideration. I believe our community deserves to understand what became of that vision and whether the time has come to evaluate it again.

A community library is an investment in literacy, education, families and the future of our children. I hope the Council will reopen this conversation and allow us to explore what could be possible for Liberty Park.

Thank you for your time, your service to our community, and your consideration. I respectfully request that this letter and my comments be entered into the official record for the September 9 City Council meeting.

Sincerely,

Missy Sun

Library Aide

Vestavia Hills Elementary Liberty Park

Liberty Park Resident

From: [Kimberly Cook](#)
To: [Umang Patel](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] Library & buses for high school
Date: Wednesday, September 9, 2026 7:30:05 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Please add Kristin Rockett, 845 Reynolds Trail, to the public comment.



KIMBERLY B. COOK
Councilor | City of Vestavia Hills
P 205.807.0503 | vhal.org
1032 Montgomery Hwy
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

From: Kristin Rockett <kristinrockett@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, September 7, 2026 4:51 PM
To: Dennis Weaver <dweaver@vhal.org>; Kimberly Cook <kcook@vhal.org>; Michael Vercher <mvercher@vhal.org>; Ali Pilcher <apilcher@vhal.org>; Jeff Downes <jdownes@vhal.org>; Cinnamon McCulley <cmcculley@vhal.org>; Ashley Curry <acurry@vhal.org>
Subject: [External] Library & buses for high school

Hello,

As a resident of Liberty Park, we desperately need a library over here. Once my children reached 3rd or 4th grade and moved into chapter books, they don't know what book they want to read unless they go physically look at the book. They want to read the back of the book and see if it interests them. Our children are busy in sports and after school activities and we don't have time to make a 1+ hour round trip to the Library in the Forest. I have spent thousands of dollars on Amazon in the past few years buying my children books.

Most of the residents of Liberty Park feel as though we are the ugly stepchildren of Vestavia proper. People moved into this neighborhood with the promise of a LP high school coming before their children would reach high school. That never happened and many people feel tricked. They planted roots here and don't want to move to central Vestavia. If buses were offered for the 9th grade campus and the high school, that would tremendously help. It's a logistical nightmare trying to get kids to different schools that are 30 minutes apart. Some people do end up having to move to central Vestavia just because they can not get their kids to multiple schools with different start times and make it to work on time.

We would really love a library and a few buses to the 9th grade and high school.

Thank you,
Kristin Rockett