

Plain Community Branch library is closing. Here's what to expect from the renovation



Grace Springer

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Key Points

Plans for the renovation include a new teen space, new technology and more private study spaces.

The library branch is expected to reopen in August.

The bookmobile will be available to the community while the branch is closed.

PLAIN TWP. – The Plain Community Branch of Stark Library will be closing for approximately five months beginning Monday.

The library is closing for renovations and updates as part of Stark Library's Re|imagine project. Its last day open is Saturday.

More: Stark Library unveils \$54 million plan for new Main Library, Operations Center

"We've done this in six locations, this will be the seventh," said Mary Ellen Icaza, the agency's CEO and executive director. "We've been doing this work since about 2018 ... people have been really really responsive, liking the locations and being happy to come back to their branches."

Previously, Stark Library closed and renovated North Branch, DeHoff Memorial Branch, Madge Youtz Branch, East Canton Branch, Perry Sippo Branch and Lake Community Branch. The Jackson Community Branch was also opened as part of the Re|imagine project.

Plans for the Plain Community Branch renovation include a new teen space, new technology and more private study spaces.

The branch, built in 2006, will be redecorated during the renovation with quotes submitted by people in the community, new carpet and new furniture.

Barring any construction delays, the library is expected to reopen in August, before next school year.

Making the Plain Community Branch Library 'more flexible'

The goal is to make the space more friendly for patrons, Icaza said.

"The renovations will center around making the spaces more flexible so that we have things on wheels, we can reconfigure tables and seating arrangements," she said.

This will be useful to easily convert the space for different people and programs, Icaza said.

"There's a lot of families that come to the branch, and there's a lot of students that use the facility, too. The flexibility here will be nice because there's a wide variety of different kinds of users," she said.

Stephanie Cargill, Stark Library communications director, said flexibility has been useful at other locations such as when spaces need converted for voting or to accommodate social distancing during the pandemic.

"When we opened Jackson, it was during the heavy stages of COVID. We had put everything out and then we had to completely reconfigure for safety," she said. "It was very easy to do in that location because everything was on wheels."

Laptop lending is another new feature coming to the branch in addition to existing desktop computers.

New teen space at the Plain Community Branch library

The library is next door to GlenOak High School, so students often walk in after school to study, work on projects or wait to be picked up.

A room near the library entrance will be transformed into the new teen space to better accommodate students.

"Right now, that space is being used for A/V, but given the focus on students, because of the connection with the school, we're going to convert that into a teen space," Icaza said.

The current teen space, which has some seating and the young adult book section, is relegated to under the stairs.

Plans include more seating and a more colorful and welcoming environment, Icaza said. The young adult book section will also be moved into the new space.

Among other renovations, the branch will get more private and group study rooms for students or business meetings. The children's section, located at the back of the library, will be adjusted to create more open space.

How do I access library services while the Plain Community Branch is closed?

One of the library's bookmobiles will be available on site in the library parking lot to access services while the branch is closed.

Patrons can pick up and return books, access printing and browse from the bookmobile.

Here are the bookmobile's hours:

1:30-3:30 p.m. Tuesdays

9-11 a.m. Wednesdays

9-11 a.m. Saturdays

Reach Grace at 330-580-8364 or gspringer@gannett.com. Follow her on X @GraceSpringer16.