

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why does the Lee-Whedon Memorial Library need to renovate and expand now?

Opened for business in 1966 – years before moon landings, the personal computer explosion, and the internet age – Lee-Whedon was constructed to house books. As Medina has grown and evolved, so has the library. Residents and visitors have more reasons to visit the library than ever. The library serves as a community hub, offering dynamic opportunities for learning, collaboration and community engagement.

- According to a 2022 community needs assessment, users want larger collections, more programs, dedicated program space, and quiet areas for small meetings and tutoring.
- Participation in library events – 900 programs conducted in 2024 alone - are capped due to space and parking constraints. Of the 287 days a year that the library is open, events – created for a diverse user base - are scheduled 80% of the time.
- The library’s open floor plan, unchanged since -1960s, impedes any private or age specific programming.
- Despite community demand, there are no dedicated meeting or tutoring spaces. Eighty-four community organizations utilize the library and in 2024, Lee-Whedon hosted 600 tutoring sessions. The library’s only designated meeting space is multi-functional, housing local history and microfilm collections and providing additional programming space.

2. Are Library staff and volunteers working with building and fundraising professionals?

The Library Board of Trustees has engaged Passero Associates, an engineering and architecture firm with locations in Rochester, Albany, and the Hudson Valley. Working with input provided by a 2022 community needs assessment, these “design and build” professionals have provided volunteers and staff with a series of informed schematics with cost estimates based on a 1-year construction window. Passero Associates has worked on multiple library projects in Greece, Chili, Irondequoit, Henrietta, and Livonia. Volunteers and staff have also engaged IvyPartners, a management consulting firm, to determine the feasibility of conducting a community-wide capital campaign to support proposed construction. Ivy was engaged by the Hoag Library of Albion as it transitioned from its historic home to its present location.

3. What will the project include and how much will it cost?

Volunteers and staff have prioritized 2 new meeting rooms, 2 restrooms, 2 tutoring rooms, large programming area, teen room, Friends of the Library room, expanded children’s area, additional parking, expanded adult collection space, and a quiet research room. A cost estimate of \$5.2 million has been provided by Christa Construction and Passero Associates. This total encompasses all professional fees and construction costs.

4. How will the project be paid for?

Given the scope of the project, the Board of Trustees is pursuing multiple funding sources to make the new Lee-Whedon affordable for the community.

Project Cost	\$5.2 million
Grants	\$1.58 million
Library Investment from Reserves	\$175,000
Next Chaper Capital Campaign	\$500,000

To secure favorable pricing and to enhance the library’s eligibility for additional grant support, Lee-Whedon obtained a \$5.2 million community bond in 2024, independent of the Medina School District. Using campaign contributions, library savings and the proceeds from an aggressive grant strategy, volunteers hope to reduce the projected bond by 43%.

5. When will construction begin?

With the bond enabling the library to proceed with construction while other funding sources are secured, construction could begin in late 2025.

6. Will the cost of operating the library increase?

It’s reasonable to expect only modest increases in operational costs for a new and improved library.

7. Who uses the library now and how are they using it? Is there a need for an improved library?

A library's design can make programs and services easy or impossible to deliver. Completed and occupied in 1966, Lee-Whedon was designed to hold books. But in roughly 60 years, it has evolved to become a vital community hub. Today our library is a classroom, safe space, entertainment and business center, and portal to the world, all under one roof. Consider the library as a:

Meeting Venue: Utilizing the library for meeting space are the following community organizations: Village of Medina, Sandstone Society, Medina Historical Society, YMCA, Social Services, Staffing Agencies, Cornell Cooperative Extension, GO-Art, Medina Alumni, Orleans Mental Health, and the Parade of Lights Committee. Community organizations also set up displays in the library program area. ALL community meetings/displays must be scheduled around the 900 annual library events/programs to avoid space conflicts and to ensure adequate parking.

Educational Classroom: Tutors regularly use library study tables for students, and the library hosts its own tech tutoring sessions. Homeschooling groups utilize the library for multiple resources and programs. Library print and A/V collections are continually used by patrons of all ages from within Medina and across the NIOGA system.

Technology Center: Library patrons utilize free WiFi and an array of equipment that can be used in-house or borrowed, including computers, iPads, tablets, hotspots, scanners, printer/copier/fax, projector and screen, VHS to DVD conversion and slide scanner.

8. Will the building project enable the library to expand its programming?

Yes. Long considered and based on demand, staff are eager to provide increased adult, teen and children's programming including genealogy and local history, cooking classes, gaming opportunities, and story hours.

9. How can I make a gift to support the project or get involved as a volunteer?

Contact Kelsie Stahl 585-798-3430, kstahl@leewhedon.org or Kristine Mostyn at kmostyn@nioga.org.

Gift options will include cash, non-cash contributions such as retirement accounts and gifts of appreciated securities, in-kind contributions (if applicable), and more. The library is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization so any donation can be fully tax-deductible as allowed by the IRS. Donors will have the opportunity to make a five-year pledge. Other options can be discussed on an individual basis. All donors will be formally acknowledged for their giving for tax preparation purposes. They will also receive public recognition. Naming opportunities are available on a first-come-first served basis beginning at the \$10,000 level.

There will be numerous volunteer opportunities available as the project moves forward.

10. Have other options been looked at other than expanding the current library?

Other locations have been considered such as the Towne School and purchasing the former Ace Hardware, located across the street from the Library. Both options were cost prohibitive given renovation needs and staffing. Leasing property has pros and cons given maintenance and lease terms. Locating a centrally located, fully ADA accessible 15,000 sq ft building in Medina would be difficult. However, without owning the facility where it operates, Lee-Whedon would be ineligible for certain grants they currently receive.

11. Has the library considered building a second floor?

Yes. The current building is not constructed to carry the weight of a second floor. Significant renovation would be required. The proposed new addition is also not designed for a second floor under the recommendation of the architect and engineering firm.

12. Is using a flat roof the best idea for Western New York?

The library currently has a flat roof without experiencing any issues. The term "flat roof" is a misnomer. There is still pitch with drainage to eliminate standing water or snow accumulation.

13. How long has the library been planning this project?

For nearly two decades, Lee-Whedon's volunteers have envisioned the renovation and expansion of the library to address the evolving needs of the community effectively and affordably.

2018-2021: Through the utilization of library savings, adjacent properties were acquired, and existing structures were demolished to facilitate future expansion.

2023-2024: By incorporating professional and community input, and through meticulous planning, the project size was reduced by 43% — from \$9.2 million to \$5.2 million — without compromising functionality. To secure favorable pricing and to enhance the library's eligibility for additional grant support, Lee-Whedon obtained a \$5.2 million community bond, independent of the Medina School District.

2025: Lee-Whedon is initiating a \$500,000 capital campaign to further increase the project's affordability. Combined with an aggressive grant strategy, this business plan aims to reduce the projected bond by 43% — from \$5.2 million to \$3.12 million.

14. How frequently is the meeting room currently used?

Our November 2024 statistics show that the meeting room was reserved on 21 of the 24 days that the library was open. This included 15 community organizations, 8 therapy sessions, 2 County Health meetings, 3 book clubs, 4 Library meetings, and 1 Digital Literacy workshop. Statistics are not available for how many times that same room, which also houses the local history collection, was used by researchers. There were also 55 tutoring sessions held in the middle of the library because they could not use the meeting room.

Incorporated into the renovation and expansion plan, Lee-Whedon will have two meeting rooms with one that will have exterior entry for use after business hours. Two study or tutoring rooms will also be created. In 2024, Lee-Whedon hosted 600 tutoring sessions.