

Through the redesign and revitalization of the Edgartown Public Library's outdoor space, this project is designed to create opportunities to meet both the current and future needs of our community, for patrons of all ages. This project is aimed at creating a beautiful and practical outdoor area that not only enhances the original design of our library but adds to its versatility as community space for various activities. The library foresees this space providing a multitude of uses, such as a much-needed area for kids to play and engage with the library after school, a musical performance venue, an outdoor learning commons, and an open but intentionally designed space for community gatherings of all kinds.

### Project Overview:

The project's goal is to reimagine our library's currently underutilized and overlooked outdoor campus into a vibrant and dynamic community asset. Having been in its current location next to the Edgartown School for more than eight years, the library has seen the myriad ways in which community members engage with the building and grounds. We envision an inviting and accessible space that seamlessly integrates with the library's mission of fostering learning, community engagement, and literacy.

### Objectives:

1. **Safety:** Landscaping plays a crucial role in creating safe environments for children at play by incorporating design elements that reduce hazards and promote a secure atmosphere. Strategic placement of trees, shrubs, and other landscape elements can serve as natural barriers and delineate play zones. Well-maintained hardscapes and clear sightlines ensure that caregivers can easily supervise children, while thoughtful landscaping can also provide a more secure space for imaginative play along a high-traffic roadway. Overall, a well-designed landscape not only enhances this town asset, but significantly contributes to the safety and well-being of our youngest citizens.
2. **Versatility and Community Engagement:** Create a multifunctional space that can accommodate a wide range of activities, including musical performances, after school activities, author talks, outdoor dance and movement programs, open-air movie nights, and community events.
3. **Youth Engagement:** Develop a designated area for children to play, learn, and explore, promoting literacy through interactive story times and health through outdoor activities. The library typically serves over 6,300 children after school annually.
4. **Accessibility:** Ensure the campus is accessible to all (including individuals with disabilities) through ramps, pathways, and versatile seating options.
5. **Enhanced Aesthetics:** Transform the current grounds into an aesthetically pleasing and welcoming environment, featuring sustainable design elements.

Budget, Revenue Sources, and Financial Sustainability:

The total estimated budget for this project is \$1.2M. It will include costs for landscaping and plantings, construction, hardscape, lighting, fencing, seating, and signage.

A portion of the project will be funded with a library trust account. Future maintenance and mowing needs are included in the library's existing budget, and all plantings will be selected with low-maintenance and sustainability in mind.

Timeline:

The project is expected to commence in May 2025 with an estimated completion date of Fall/Winter 2025.

Community Impact:

The revitalization of our outdoor space will have a profound impact on our community. It will:

- Provide a safe and stimulating environment for children to play and learn, supporting early childhood development.
- Offer a versatile venue for outdoor library programming, enhancing educational and cultural opportunities as well as promoting lifelong learning and connection.
- Create a gathering place for all residents and visitors, fostering a stronger sense of community and social engagement.
- Encourage a deeper connection with nature, promoting health and well-being among library patrons.

We strongly believe that the driving philosophy of the library should be reflected both inside and outside the building. The space should be designed in a way that offers limitless uses and potential, and be adaptable to what the community needs in our ever-changing global and local landscape. With an eye to both safety and design, we are excited about this project transforming our library campus into an engaging visible space along the often-busy West Tisbury Road. We also believe we can turn this underutilized outdoor space into a vibrant and inclusive community asset that will benefit generations to come.

Respectfully submitted for committee review,

Lisa Sherman  
Edgartown Library Director