

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# King County Library System

960 Newport Way NW, Issaquah, WA 98027

## King County Library System's Renton Library Receives Architectural Honors

Renton's prized public landmark, the "library over the river," received a new honor for its outstanding renovation, the result of an intensive collaboration between Renton residents, the King County Library System (KCLS), the City of Renton and architects Miller Hull Partnership.

Renton has boasted a library since 1903, and their library has grown with the times ever since. The original river-spanning building, built by the City of Renton in 1966, held a commanding position over the Cedar River that made it unique among public libraries.

As the region grew, library traffic and new technologies continued to increase demands on the building's interior space and infrastructure. Along with growth, the challenges of maintaining a stand-alone City library lead to a public vote on joining the King County Library System, and the measure was approved by a close vote in 2010.

The initial plan was to relocate the library to a larger facility in Renton, but the city's residents held fast to their beloved library in its existing location, which led to the impressive renovation of the interior and exterior, creating an effectively new library around the 1966 structural core.

"Our plan for the new Renton Library was to create a place with a stunning new design that also preserves the unique legacy of the building over the river," said Mayor Denis Law. "We are very pleased to have a world-class library in our city for the community to enjoy."

Today, the revised Renton Library was named as one of seven chosen by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the American Library Association (ALA) to receive the 2016 Library Building Awards.

The AIA and the ALA developed this award program to encourage and recognize excellence in the architectural design of libraries. "As the traditional role of libraries evolves, the designs of these community spaces have changed to reflect the needs" of the communities they serve.

In the award announcement, AIA/ALA described the challenging project:

*The original 1966 library structure was...not compliant with current energy codes and failing structurally. Its building systems were not able to keep up with the increased demands of a 21st century library. The renovation maintained the original super structure, but introduced a new energy efficient exterior envelope with floor to ceiling views to the nearby river. Power/data distribution—vital for modern library functionality—was problematic to expand in a concrete precast structure. The team designed overhead power drops using aircraft cable and steel connections to deliver power to study tables and computer stations.*

Ruth Baleiko AIA, partner, Miller Hull Partnership, added: "Our team was thrilled to help retain this unique community resource, and to bring it forward as an updated place of discovery for generations to come."

KCLS Director Gary Wasdin summed up the honor: "This award is a great recognition to the beautiful Renton Library, known affectionately as "the library over the river." We are so appreciative to the City of Renton for their commitment to this project, and to the community members who have always known this library to be a genuine treasure."

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