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Book Smart

Safdie Architects to restore Brooklyn's Pacific Library branch

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Pacific Library from 4th Avenue. (Courtesy Safdie Architects)

Safdie Architects is restoring Brooklyn's Pacific Library branch—the borough's first Carnegie library. The Pacific branch is in downtown Brooklyn, near the Barclays Center.

The upgrade will rectify a past series of renovations that had deleterious effects. AYON Studio is the architect of record and preservation architect.

Pacific Library opened in 1904. In 2019, Brooklyn Public Library began gathering community input to reshape the branch that Safdie's design builds from.

New classrooms, expanded children's and teen spaces, and room for the Adult Learning program were among key requests from the community.



View of the young adult space. (Courtesy Safdie Architects)

The planned extension will measure 1,500 square feet and introduce features that will expand public spaces and increase the amount of natural light in the interior.

Excavation on the property around the library will create space for a new sunken garden and a two-story solarium addition.

The library's original conical roof and skylight will be restored, paired with a new interior skylight that will carry light down to the main floor.



Pacific Library level 3. (Courtesy Safdie Architects)

There will also be a new front entry, circulation core, and external egress. Single-user restrooms will make the building more accessible.

The restoration will be a handsome addition to the already robust portfolio of library projects by [Safdie](#).

Past library projects by the firm include Vancouver Library Square, Salt Lake City Public Library, and the transformation of the historic Free Library of Philadelphia.

Known for designing major cultural institutions, mixed-use developments, and civic complexes, the firm is bringing the same focus on public life to the intimate scale of the neighborhood library.

“I was excited at the opportunity to restore this unusually elegant building to its initial glory and to remove changes made over the past century,” Safdie Architects founder Moshe Safdie said in a statement.

Linda E. Johnson, president and CEO of Brooklyn Public Library (BPL), affirmed the renovation is “an important step toward ensuring the library continues to serve the community for another century.”

Other projects Brooklyn Public Library is undertaking includes [a renovation by Allied Works of the Eastern Parkway Branch](#). Its Canarsie Branch designed by Studio Joseph is under construction. BPL’s Red Hook branch is currently being renovated by LEVENBETTS.

A construction timeline for the Pacific Library’s renovation has not been shared.