

Aurora Free Library Preservation Committee Project Summary Report: March 2026

“The Board of Trustees for the Aurora Free Library has the responsibility to ensure our building remains viable for future generations of library and theater users. To this end, The Preservation Committee of the Board believes that over the next 10 years, a coordinated effort must be focused on raising funds and executing the work needed to renovate and restore the exterior envelope and the interior of our 1899 building.”

(Board Resolution adopted July 23, 2023).

Since 2023, the Preservation Committee has identified and pursued several building projects that focus on the restoration and renovation of the tile roof, the historic leaded-glass windows, clear glass windows, the exterior condition of the half-timber and stucco walls, and stone masonry. Other projects include a new air-cooling system for the Morgan Opera House and a new hot-water boiler.

Renovation of the Tile Roof

This work in Summer 2023 renovated the original tile roof and its underlayment and fascia boards for the front gable that faces Main Street. A survey of the full roof was also done, and several broken tiles were replaced and leaky areas were repaired. The gutters and downspouts were also cleaned and reset. The work was conducted by Hale Roofing of Horseheads at a cost of \$80,444. Funding grants included the New York State Aid for Library Construction Program, The Triad Foundation of Ithaca, and the Metcalf Foundation of Auburn, along with donations from community members who provided supplemental matching funds for the grants.

Morgan Opera House Cooling Project

Installation of a new air cooling system for the Opera House was completed in the Spring of 2025. The contractors were Taitem Engineering of Ithaca and the Sure Temp Company of Binghamton. The estimated project cost of \$59,200 was raised through funding grants from the New York State Aid for Library Construction Program, The Triad Foundation of Ithaca, and a matching donation from The Dentes Family of Aurora. As the project was completed at less than the estimated cost, a new hot-water boiler was added to replace the leaky boiler, with agreement from the funding entities.

Renovation of the Exterior Tudor-Revival Walls

In 2025, we received an estimate for renovation of the front half-timber building facade that faces Main Street. The project scope will focus on (1) repair and patching of the stucco plaster, (2) renovation of all wood, with replacement of any wood that is found to be rotted, and (3) caulking, priming, and painting. The anticipated contractor is Pinnacle Construction, with an estimated project cost of \$113,900. We plan to pursue a grant application for this work through the Emerson Foundation of Auburn, supplemented with matching funds from community donors.

Clear-Glass Window Restoration and Replacement

In July 2025, we submitted a funding application to the New York State Aid for Library Construction Program for restoration of the eight double-hung sash windows on the main Library floor and replacement of the ten large casement windows and exterior trim in the Opera House. The anticipated cost is \$224,500 for work to be conducted in 2027, pending State approval in late 2026. Our 10% matching cost for this project will be \$22,450, for which we will apply in part to the Metcalf Foundation and Library donors.

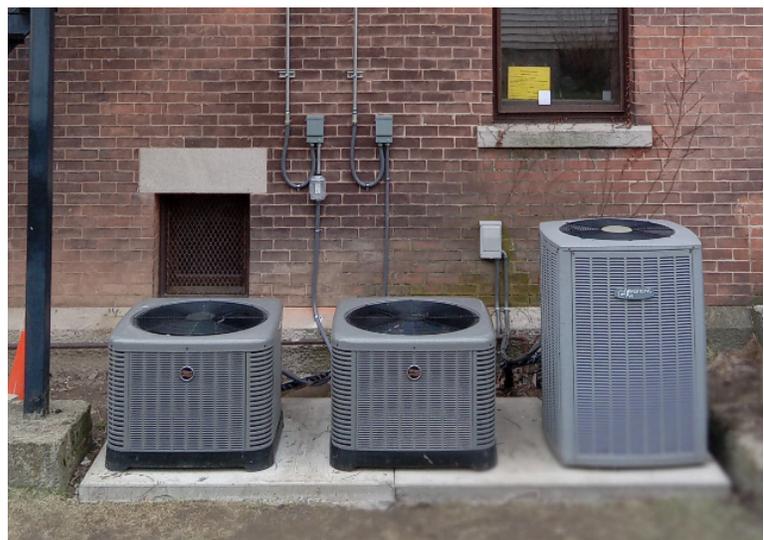
Leaded-Glass Windows Restoration

A grant application for restoration of selected leaded-glass windows was submitted in November 2025 to State Senator Rachel May's office, who will sponsor our funding request for \$66,000 through the New York Community Resiliency, Economic Sustainability, and Technology (CREST) Program. This grant will address the serious condition of all of the leaded-glass windows in the balcony area of the Opera House and the glass windows that surround the Main Street entrance door. No matching funds will be required if this grant is awarded.

Front Step at Main Street Entrance

Stock and Stone Masonry of Skaneateles has provided an estimate of \$5,000 to repair and seal the front steps, where the stone balustrades (knee walls) have heaved up with large open cracks on both sides. The work will include replacing the sealant at stair tread joints and new mortar joints. Costs will be allocated from available Aurora Free Library funds that have been donated by the community for building preservation.

Please see the attached photos for selected projects.



Renovation of the Tile Roof



Morgan Opera House Cooling Project



Renovation of the Exterior Walls

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Clear-Glass Windows Project

Leaded-Glass Windows Restoration