



City of Bellevue Public Library

July 28, 2025

Mayor Giordani and Bellevue Common Council,

The Hailey Public Library and Bellevue Public Library are exploring the formation of a library district to serve our communities more sustainably and equitably. This notice of intent to create a library district in Blaine County excludes the area served by the Little Wood River Library District in the southeastern portion of the county, including Carey and Picabo. The approximate northern boundary of the district is Greenhorn and East Fork Road.

Establishing a district library will enable Hailey and Bellevue libraries to consolidate their resources and deliver stronger, more consistent library services to both city and Blaine County residents. A district structure provides a more stable and dedicated funding source through a voter-approved property tax levy, thereby reducing the libraries' reliance on city general funds and annual budgeting decisions.

We intend to bring this to the voters on May 19, 2026.

What is a library district?

A library district is an independent taxing district that provides library resources and services for residents within a defined area. It is a separate political subdivision governed by a five-member elected board, each of whom serves a four-year term. Similar to the current governing structure, the elected board oversees the district's operations, including budgeting, bylaws, policies, and the hiring and governance of the library district director.

The formation of a library district requires a simple majority of the registered voters residing in the defined district area.

To qualify for the ballot, signatures from twenty percent of the registered voters within the proposed district must be collected and certified before presenting the petition to the Blaine County Commissioners and County Clerk. Once approved, the measure is placed on the ballot in the next election.

Why a library district?

A district model allows for:

- Greater flexibility to expand services for youth, seniors, and working families
- Broader access to physical and digital collections by a larger population
- Improved staffing and programming capacity

- Consistent, long-term funding dedicated to library services and needs
- Long-term sustainability and strategic planning capability to plan and manage growth

A library district ensures a stable and predictable funding source for its library system, while creating economies of scale that help keep costs manageable and provide better access to services and programs for more residents. The monies collected through a district will fund library operations, including staffing, resources (books, subscriptions, and digital resources), programming, and technology, as well as facilities and their maintenance and improvements.

A library district enables local voters to decide on library funding and governance. It provides accountability through an elected board of trustees and ensures that residents in Bellevue, Hailey, and the surrounding rural county have equal access to high-quality, sustainable library resources.

Preliminary Steps Taken:

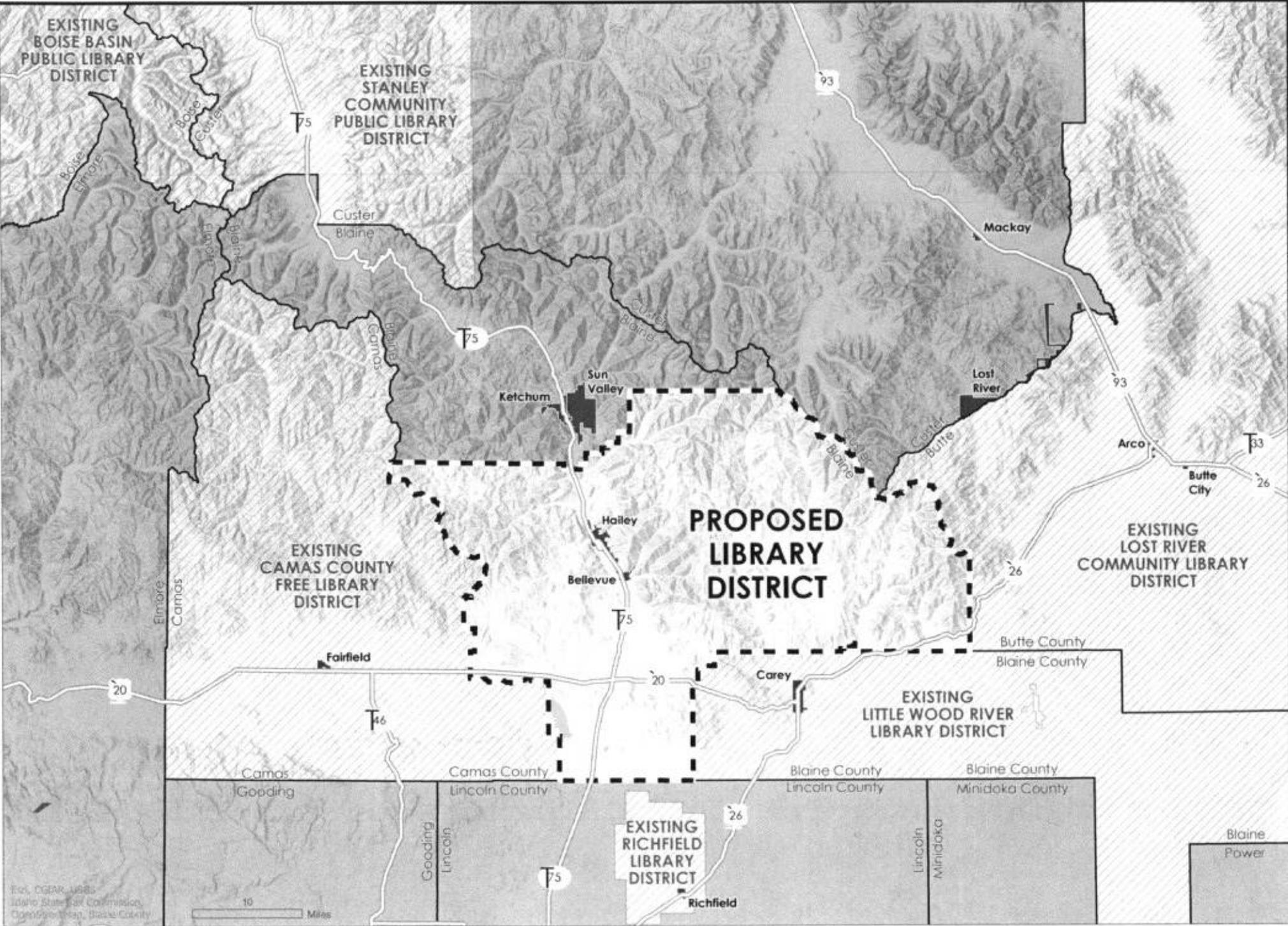
- The Hailey Library Board and the Bellevue Library Board have formally motioned to move forward with the formation of a district
- A steering committee of seven members has been convened
- A district map draft has been drawn
- Mission and vision statements have been drafted
- A list of possible names for the district has been collected
- Community influencers/amplifiers identified, contacted, and educated about our intent.

Identified six phases (for creating a library district)

- Pre-petition phase
 - Establish the map
 - Draft a petition and obtain all approvals
 - Identify and engage with community members and stakeholders, and provide opportunities for feedback and assistance throughout the districting project.
- Petitioning phase
 - Establish clear communication points to support the petition, working in concert with stakeholders such as city governments in Bellevue and Hailey, county commissioners, non-profit organizations, educators, and other relevant parties.
 - Organize the petitioning campaign to ensure compliance with state and country regulations.
 - Recruit volunteers to circulate petitions for signatures
 - Monitor the progress of signature gathering and modify engagement strategies as needed
 - In anticipation of being on the ballot
 - Collaborate with consultants and experts to establish a budget for a district library that informs the rate of a permanent levy to be placed on the ballot, ensuring the sustainability of quality library services while avoiding overburdening voters and taxpayers.

- Pre-Ballot Phase
 - Prepare the ballot language and the library budget that informs the permanent levy rate.
 - Draft ballot language that explicitly defines the proposed district's borders and levy rate.
- The Election Campaign Phase
 - Organize and conduct campaign strategies and communications to ensure passage of the districting measure.
- District Library Phase (if approved by the voters)
 - Create bylaws, policies, and a budget
 - Establish staffing & administration structures
 - Determine Tax Commission deadlines
 - Obtain agreements with the cities of Bellevue & Hailey
 - Appoint an inaugural Board of Trustees
- District Library Phase (if not approved by voters)
 - Continue as separate city libraries
 - Re-access options

PROPOSED LIBRARY DISTRICT MAP



Exp. DGEAR 1988
Idaho State Tax Commission
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