

Librarian's Shelf by Karen Connell

Looking Forward Together

You may have noticed closed traffic lanes, trucks, and equipment around the Columbus Public Library recently, but rest assured the library is still open and ready to serve you. The vacated downtown station of the Columbus Fire Department and the attached community building are in the early stages of demolition. Over the next few months, the traffic lane and sidewalk restrictions will continue as the building comes down.

The only change library users should experience due to the demolition are the closure of the drive through return drop in the alley and a few less parking stalls along the front of the library building. Library materials can be returned inside the building, or by utilizing the walk-up return drop on the east side of the library's entrance. Call us at 402-564-7116 opt. 2 or visit www.cplconnect.us if you would like to renew your items from home.

The Bookmobile, which serves Platte County as part of the Library Services agreement between Platte County and the City of Columbus, just completed the first week of fall routes. Visit our catalog website (www.cplconnect.us) and click the 'Bookmobile' menu link to see the current schedule and download a printable version. While routes may continue as usual, the published fall schedule ends November 4 because the continuation of county library service will be determined by rural county residents on Election Day.

Registered voters in Platte County who reside outside the city limits of Columbus and Humphrey will be asked to vote "Yes" or "No" for a library services contract. A "Yes" vote results in the continuation of library service, including the bookmobile, through June 2023. A "No" vote will end library service, including the bookmobile, to rural residents effective 90 days after the election.

City of Columbus voters will also have a library-related question on their ballots this November. Voters registered within Columbus city limits will have the opportunity to approve the issuance of bonds for an exciting community building project. No additional taxes would be needed to fund the development, construction, or furnishing of this building. These bonds would be paid using an existing half percent (½ %) sales tax that was approved by voters in 2016 for the exclusive purpose of constructing new fire, police, and library/cultural buildings.

Located in downtown Columbus, this building would unify our Public Library and City Hall, include community and art spaces, and provide leased space for a Children's Museum and coffee shop. The ballot question asks Columbus residents to give the City of Columbus permission to issue bonds to pay for the library/cultural portions of this proposed facility, including a community room with an art gallery and shell spaces for a children's museum and coffee shop.

If the issuance of bonds is approved by voters, site and floor plans would be finalized, building materials selected, and the library would continue to serve the community from a temporary location for an estimated two years while the current building is removed and new construction is completed.

Visit <https://buildingtogethercolumbus.org> to learn more.