

Be a part of the Library & Cultural Arts Center by Drew Brookhart

The Library/ Cultural Arts Center is an exciting, large-scale project that will benefit everyone in Columbus and Platte County. The project offers something for everyone: whether you are a library user of any age, interested in the visual and performing arts, or have a vested interest in the community's quality of life. As the project moves forward there have been some recurring questions that are addressed below. This important project will require a high level of community involvement. If you would like to be involved please contact ***Building the Next Chapter*** Capital Campaign General Chairs Jim and Connie Hellbusch, Mimi Ernst, or Library Director Drew Brookhart.

Why do we need a new library?

The library has outgrown the space it currently has. Waiting times exist for computers, space is limited in the children's room, space to expand the collection of books and other resources is limited, restrooms are not ADA compliant and the access to many areas are difficult for elderly and disabled patrons. This facility will not only serve as a center for education and enrichment, it also will provide our community with a competitive edge in attracting new business and new residents.

Aren't libraries going out of date, with technology as advanced as it is?

The Columbus Library is heavily used. More than 136,000 people visited the Columbus library last year, using the library's vast collection but also taking part in educational activities for children, teens and adults. There were 161,400 Wi-Fi sessions and 40,000 public computer sessions in the past year. The Art Gallery had 8,000 visitors from 17 states and 3 countries last year. The Arts Council educated and entertained 3,453 children. Imagine how many more people would use a new, modern facility.

How much support is there for this project?

Over the last several years a new library and access to the cultural arts have been identified as a priority for Columbus. Employers stressed the importance of the facility in attracting and retaining quality, lasting employees. People already in Columbus identified the facility as critical for maintaining and improving their quality of life. The majority of respondents who participated in a recent fundraising feasibility study representing Columbus and surrounding areas said that they considered a new Library/Cultural Arts Center an important priority for Columbus.

Why is a new location proposed?

The new location is about one block east of the existing library. It will provide more room for parking (a dedicated lot), and it will not require relocating the fire station or tearing down other buildings.

Why do we need an auditorium?

There's nothing currently like it downtown, the 300-seat auditorium will include a stage, dressing rooms and a projection area. It would be used by the library for presentations and it would attract performing arts productions for people to enjoy. It would also be used for community meetings and presentations. Other auditoriums in Columbus, including the high school and community college, are regularly booked with events.

How much money do we need to raise?

Based on the strong support for this project, the campaign committee will seek to raise \$6 million to \$8 million to help fund roughly half of the overall cost of a new Library/Cultural Arts Center with gifts from individuals, families, businesses and foundations.

Will the Quality of Life grants be part of the fundraising?

The Library/Cultural Arts Center is designated as a Columbus-area Quality of Life project. There is a challenge grant tied to this project that is an unprecedented opportunity for Columbus. People investing the first \$2.72 million into the Library/Cultural Arts project will help the Library/Cultural Arts Center receive the challenge grant funds that total \$1.36 million—that will result in \$4.08 million, which is half of our overall fundraising goal.

Please Join Us!

Please join us in *Building the Next Chapter* for current and future generations. We urge you to consider how you can help in support of this vision for Columbus and Platte County.