



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Are libraries really needed in the age of technology?**

Libraries are more vital and necessary than ever! Studies show that public libraries experience an increase in usage when their libraries have been expanded and renovated. This includes both materials checked-out and program attendance, even while technology is more and more available in homes. Particularly in difficult economic times, libraries 'level the playing field' - offering all people equal access to the tools they need to stay informed, educated and connected.

### **What is the vision for the new Watertown Library Center and how will the new structure achieve that vision?**

The vision of the new Watertown Library Center is to ensure that all children have an expanded educational program, helping them to excel in and out of school. We want to help attract families to stay or move to Watertown, improve safety and community access, and offer services updated for the Internet age.

Library visitors will enjoy a bright new children's area, three times the size of the current one, and built on the latest concepts of play and child development science. Plans also include coffeehouse-quality seating, a designated quiet reading room, a 150-person community room with glass walls to invite people in and add life to Main Street, and new areas designed for art and culture.

### **How will the new library use technology?**

Public libraries have never been just buildings with books, but destinations for lifelong learning. They are a place for personal growth and reinvention, a place for help in navigating the information age, a gathering place for civic and cultural engagement, and a trusted place for preserving the culture of a community. While the technology in every library continues to change, we expect to offer the following technology, which is designed to be flexible for the future:

- Downloadable media including e-books, audiobooks, and magazines that a patron can access from their own devices;
- Innovative technology and wireless Internet access throughout the building, along with charging stations that are easily available so patrons can recharge laptops and other electronic devices;
- Mobile computer training equipment for the public to learn about the latest technology and that turns any room into a training center for hands-on assistance and training from professionals;
- Laptops and tablets available for patron check-out to use within the Library;

- Seamless integration between the Library's online catalog, databases and electronic downloads and patrons' electronic devices including tablets and smartphones.
- Connection to the fiber optic broadband.

### **Will the library have public meeting space?**

The library recognizes the considerable need for public meeting space in Watertown. The new library will provide sizeable and flexible public meeting space that can be used by people and organizations throughout the community. The space will be designed to accommodate groups of different sizes and ages and will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Smaller meetings spaces will accommodate study groups or one-on-one interactions.

### **How will the library partner with local business, community organizations and the community?**

The library will have opportunities to work with local businesses and organizations by providing adequate space to use if they have a meeting, reception or training needs. Family and children focused organizations can use the TalkReadPlay Center. The library will also work with businesses and organizations to bring speakers, seminars and workshops to our community.

### **How much will it cost and who will pay for it?**

The budget for the new library is \$10 million. \$4.38 million of that has been promised by the city (via a June 2018 resolution) as long as the library can secure at least \$2.92 million in pledges and collect at least half of that by the end of 2019. Our current budget includes an additional \$0.5 million of in-kind parking lot development from the city. The *Key To Opportunity* campaign has a goal of \$5.12 million; we anticipate 50% will come from people and businesses in Watertown and the other 50% will come from local and regional foundations.

### **How is the library planning to expand when it doesn't own all the properties along Main Street?**

The Library Board has been working with the City of Watertown and a specialized relocation company to acquire neighboring properties. All of these properties have recently been for sale on the open market and all property owners have been engaged, so the Library Board is confident that these properties will be acquired in time to complete the project.

### **How will donors be recognized?**

Every gift to the library is an important step toward making the vision of a new library a reality. Gifts will be recognized in many ways ranging from inscribed pavers to a small number of naming opportunities. All gifts will be recognized in a prominent place in the library. While we feel strongly that support at all levels should be publicly acknowledged, and anonymity will be strictly respected if requested. All donations are tax deductible.

### **The library referendum passed in 2016, so when will the new library be open to the public?**

Our current roadmap will give the community ongoing views of the plan through 2019. Detailed designs are planned to be finished in 2109. With that in hand, we are looking to meet fundraising goals by the end of 2019 and for the city to provide bonded funds in early 2020. We will start constructing later in 2020.