

### 1. Why do we need a new Galesburg Public Library?

The current library building was constructed in 1961 as a small, low-cost temporary substitute for the beautiful “Carnegie” library that tragically burned to the ground on May 9, 1958. In spite of three subsequent expansions in 1967, 1984 and 1996, the library today remains inadequate to meet a modern library patron's needs.

Its physical shortcomings include bookshelves that cannot be moved because they support the second floor; headroom so low that the sprinkling system is open to vandalism; aisles too narrow for a wheelchair-bound person; bathrooms stink of urine because they were not built with proper ventilation; poor sight lines for monitoring by staff; inadequate and costly lighting; expensive and inefficient HVAC system and no library-owned parking except the small staff lot. Lack of storage space finds books and other items stored under stairways, near the boiler room or in a shed behind the library. Deliveries must come through patron entrances because there is no dedicated loading/unloading facility.

From a user standpoint, the library is crowded, lacks quiet places to read or study, lacks space for work tables, internet computers, private study rooms for tutoring, and meeting room access after library hours. Upper shelves cannot be reached without a ladder. Dead ends in the stacks are a security problem.

### 2. How big is the proposed library, compared to the current library?

The current library at 36,780 square feet is about half the size recommended for a community like Galesburg. The proposed library of 72,000 square feet was selected on the assumption that there would be just modest growth of population in Galesburg over the life of the new building.

### 3. Why is more space needed, given the trend toward electronic books, storage?

More space is needed because modern libraries serve as unofficial community centers and offer a lot more than just books. All the media that people are accustomed to today are available through the public library: Magazines, newspapers, music CD's, DVD movies, talking books, yes, even electronic books. Public internet computers are in continuous use and should be tripled from the current library's 10 modules. The meeting room in the current library is in high demand by community groups, for library programs, for presentations that may require various types of audio visual equipment. This kind of space works best if it can be accessed even if the library is closed. It should contain its own bathroom facilities, kitchenette for serving prepared foods and for cleanup, and storage space for tables, chairs and other items. Private “study” rooms in several sizes can be used for tutoring, for test taking and small group projects. Quiet areas with comfortable seating will require sufficient space to separate them from the hustle and bustle. The current library's archives containing much about the history of Galesburg are bursting at the seams and a new, larger archives with dedicated study area for researchers is planned for the new library. More space will allow for more of what people want.

### 4. Name some of the activities that the new library will enable.

The answers provided in question 3 define some of the activities unavailable in the current library. In addition, the new library is planned to contain a small cafe with both indoor and some outdoor seating

for enjoyment of a cup of coffee and perhaps a pastry when the weather is favorable. A room for a "Friends of the Library" ongoing book sale will make the twice-a-year book sale obsolete. Space will be available not only for library-designed displays but for displays by other community groups such as the Galesburg Historical Society or the Galesburg Camera Club. Work from local artists can be displayed in suitable locations within the library. A portico for dropping off and picking up patrons will make visiting the library during inclement weather a better experience. A drive-up book drop will be a patron convenience and improve efficiency for library staff. Flexible meeting space with moveable dividers will allow for multiple activities to take place at the same time.

5. Is the location a done deal? And why that location?

Yes. The new library is planned to occupy the entire block bounded by Main, West, Simmons and Academy Streets. With a two story library and parking lot meeting minimum standards, the site is adequate but not generous. It was chosen after years of identifying potential sites, including those containing existing buildings that might be re-purposed as a library, appraising the most promising ones with the assistance of a library architect and, most importantly, by soliciting the opinions of the library's stakeholders. A visioning session with a cross section of Galesburg citizens made it clear that the library should remain in the downtown area. Given the very few suitable locations, after examining sites such as the former O.T. Johnson property, this site, while not perfect, was determined to be the best option for a number of reasons: First, it is large enough; second, it is only two blocks from the present library, making it within walking distance of Moon Towers, Mary Allen West Towers, Whiting Hall, Knox College and the entire downtown community of professionals and retail business owners; third, it will give a sorely-needed boost to the West Main Street entryway to the downtown area, improving property values and hopefully spurring further development.

6. Why is issuing \$5 million in debt certificates to the library good for the city and the community?

It represents a win-win situation for the City and the Library. The debt certificates in the amount of \$5 million would be issued by the library and purchased by the City of Galesburg, upon approval by the City Council, using reserve funds not needed for current operations or capital expenditures. The debt certificates represent an I.O.U. or promissory note requiring repayment by the library to the City upon maturity, with interest paid on a regular basis. The City gains by receiving a higher rate of interest than through conventional investments available to municipal government; the library gains by paying a lower interest rate than what would be commercially available. The community gains from a process that has the potential for bringing in \$15 million from an Illinois State Library Construction Grant that will boost the local economy and provide the Galesburg community with a new library for the next 75 years or more.

7. How will the debt certificates be paid back, and over how long?

It is anticipated that the debt certificates would mature in five years. That is enough time to allow for the Illinois State Library Construction Grant process, if funded by the Legislature, to have resulted in a grant to the Galesburg Public Library, which has already qualified through its application submitted April 15, 2013, and only needs to show it has the *local matching funds* to retain or improve its position in the rankings of applicant libraries, which is the primary purpose for issuing the debt certificates.

8. What if the city will not approve of the debt certificates? Is there another plan for funding?

The library is confident in working with the Mayor, Council and City Manager that the value proposition of earning more money on City investments while helping the community secure \$15 million in new money, a 400 percent return on the \$5 million, represents a sound investment.

9. Can this library get built without a state grant?

Cognizant of the economic situation of our town, following a long period of struggle with the loss of jobs and the resultant diminution of its economic vitality, the Library Board of Trustees has chosen to make every effort to not ask its citizens to fund the new library through taxes. There will be a capital campaign which will seek voluntary contributions from the community. There will be efforts to obtain grants from other sources. Given sufficient time, and help from the many friends of the library, this library will get built.

It's interesting to note that, since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, a library referendum has never passed in Galesburg – and yet a beautiful library was dedicated in 1902 with the majority of its cost (60%) shouldered by the City Council which set aside funds for years and initiated its design and construction, and only after the building was almost done, Knox President Elect Kellogg McClelland was able to secure \$50,000.00 (representing 40% of the total cost) from Andrew Carnegie upon assurance from the Galesburg City Council that a sum of money sufficient to properly staff the building would annually be appropriated.

10. Additional comments.

Libraries are essential institutions in a democratic society, which relies on an informed citizenry to make decisions regarding its governance. Libraries are non-partisan and provide access to information regardless of economic situation or social standing.

Libraries are partners in creating educated communities by providing opportunities for self-education and life-long learning.

The Galesburg Public Library, its staff, director and board of trustees is dedicated to these propositions and to providing the Galesburg community with first class library services now and for many years to come.