

Your library needs room for learning, sharing and growing.

Missoula Public Library's early childhood literacy programs are a foundation of academic success and community stability. For so many in Missoula County, the library is their only source for reliable information, print literature, and the world wide web. Please help us tell the library's story. Together, we can expand access to this important community resource – now, and for future generations.

Out of Room and Outdated

Missoula Public Library's main facility was designed in 1974, when the County's population was about half of what it is now. The building plan did not anticipate our state's demographic shifts; the changing role of public libraries in society; or that virtually everyone would need computers and use the internet for school, work, and communication.

Current Conditions

- More than 700,000 visitors use the public library annually
- Seating room for only 38 readers, researchers, & students
- The 1970s HVAC system needs frequent and costly repairs
- Electrical outlets and capacity for digital devices are scarce
- For every new book added, another one must be removed
- Severe lack of adequate and child-friendly learning space

Operating at over-capacity means: having to curtail literacy and learning opportunities; a stagnant collection size; makeshift work stations; and long wait times for some materials and services. And, as many library users know, parking is limited.

Project History

In 2010, OZ Architects studied the current site's feasibility and determined that a substantially larger library is needed (a) for a community this size, and (b) for the level of service our community expects of their public library. OZ looked closely at building structure, public space and service standards, and regional comparisons. The OZ assessment further concluded that the current facility cannot bear the load of additional floors. Adding horizontally to the old MPL would sacrifice parking. And simply retrofitting the 1974 design would be costly, without giving the library the space it needs to serve the public now and in the future.

The 21st Century Missoula Public Library

A+E Architects has partnered with library specialists MSR Design to plan a building that will bring MPL up to contemporary standards, can flex with the community's service needs, and will accommodate future growth. The new building will cost approx. \$36.5M. \$30M is derived from a County General Obligation bond. \$5.65M is being raised in a capital campaign. Missoula will join Billings and Bozeman in investing in new, expanded libraries. An efficient, new library will increase our community's desirability to employers, young families, retirees, tech and industry interests, and new Missoulians.

Representing Missoula Values

The new public library will be a learning hub for Missoula County, a permanent downtown anchor, and a popular cultural destination for western Montana's visitors. New partnerships with Children's Museum Missoula/Families First, UM spectrUM Science Discovery Area, and Missoula Cable Access Television will position the library as a national model of innovation.

- Approx. 109,000 sf: five levels; underground parking for 66
- Expanded learning opportunities & early literacy programs
- Expanded collections; more meeting rooms/gathering space
- Tripled capacity for internet connectivity and computer use
- New collaborations with partner organizations



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