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O'FALLON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Building the Library's Future: FAQ

Why are we talking about a new library?

O'Fallon has nearly doubled in population since our library was built in 1995. The building is now too small to meet current demand for study space, programs, technology, and community use.

What's the issue with the current building?

We're simply out of space. Every area—Youth Services, study rooms, meeting space, and storage—is feeling the squeeze. A 2015 remodel improved the interior but didn't add any square footage.

Can't we just expand the current library?

Not effectively. At most, we could add about 6,000 square feet, bringing the total to 23,000. That limited expansion would cost nearly \$12 million and still wouldn't meet long-term needs due to site constraints.

What is being proposed?

A new, approximately 38,000 square foot library designed to meet both current and future community needs. For context, the current library is roughly 17,000 square feet.

Where would the new library be located?

Next to the Public Safety Building on Seven Hills Road, across from the YMCA. The City already owns the land, which helps reduce costs.

What would a new library allow us to do?

Add quiet spaces, flexible rooms for programs and meetings, and expanded technology access. Bottom line: it allows us to better serve a growing community.

What will happen to the current library building?

District 90 has expressed interest in converting it into an Early Childhood Center. Other local organizations could also make use of the space if that plan doesn't move forward.

Could the current building stay open as a second location?

No. Operating two facilities would cost more long-term than maintaining one properly sized building.

When will a decision be made?

Residents will have the opportunity to vote Yes or No on a referendum question during the November 3 election.

What happens if the referendum passes?

The project would move forward into design and construction. A very rough estimate is that the new library would open in late Fall 2028.

What happens if the referendum does not pass?

The library will continue operating in the current building. The Board would focus on making the best use of the space with modest improvements funded by existing reserves.

How much will the new library cost?

The total project is estimated at \$22.5 million.

How will it be paid for?

Funding includes \$5 million already set aside, plus bonds, donations, grants, and sponsorships. Bond repayment would require a property tax increase, hence the referendum this fall.

What would this mean for taxpayers?

For a median-value home (~\$275,000), the current library tax is about \$130/year. It would increase to about \$250/year—an increase of roughly \$120 annually, or \$10.02/month.

Will a new library require a significant increase in the annual operating budget?

No significant increase is expected. Staffing levels will remain about the same, and the more efficient, single-floor layout should support that. While the building will be larger, improved energy efficiency will help manage utility and maintenance costs. As with any year, the library will continue planning for modest, gradual increases to account for inflation and service growth.

How can people learn more or get involved?

Follow updates on the library website and Facebook, attend community sessions, and ask questions to stay informed. All the information is posted at ofpl.info/togetherofallon

Did You Know?

In FY 24/25, the O'Fallon Public Library saw:

- 136,523 in-person visitors
- 191,291 physical items checked out
- 80,311 digital items checked out
- 422 events
- 8,818 people attended those events
- 8,584 hours of public computer use
- 11,583 hours of study room use
- 4,205 new library cards issued
- 778 kids participated in our Summer Reading Program
- 7,702 of O'Fallon's 12,461 households have at least one library card (62%)

All of this was accomplished with just 2 cents out of every \$1 paid in local property taxes.