

### **Who decided Marshalltown needs a new library building?**

In May 2000, the Friends of Marshalltown Public Library conducted a series of community focus groups. 88 community members of all ages and backgrounds participated in discussions about the library and its services. The study concluded “the community is, in general, dissatisfied with the current library facility and . . . the lack of adequate parking.” An evaluation of the current building was undertaken. A building consultant and an architectural firm (FEH Associates) were hired. Public meetings were held to get input from the community. A special “Citizens’ Advisory Committee” consisting of 17 local residents and the Library Board of Trustees decided, in September 2001, remodeling the current library was not practical and a brand new library facility was needed.

### **Why do we need a new library?**

The current library was built with a \$30,000 grant from Andrew Carnegie in 1902, before the age of electricity and the automobile. Much-needed additional space was added in 1974 with private funding in memory of Miss Ethel Leise. The 19,885 square foot facility was never intended to support the levels of activity and service provided at the Marshalltown Public Library today. Over 400 people a day visit the library, approximately 100 of them to use the 6 Internet stations available in the cramped Reference area. No “off street” parking is available on site. The library’s five levels make staffing inefficient and people – especially those with mobility issues – find it difficult to navigate all the twists and turns in the current building. There is not enough room to shelve the library’s growing number of books, tapes, videos, DVDs. Attendance at children’s programs has exceeded the space in our basement meeting room or Youth Department to contain them.

### **But won’t the Internet make libraries obsolete?**

Our use statistics indicate that the Internet has made the Marshalltown Public Library more important to our community. In the past 10 years, the number of books, tapes, and other items the library checks out has increased 48%. During the same time period, attendance at youth programs has doubled. Ten years ago, the library’s one Internet station was rarely used. In 2005, 25,000 Internet log ons were recorded. We believe, and the increase of publishing in the past few years supports, that the Internet whets peoples’ interest in a variety of subjects – people then turn to libraries and bookstores to satisfy that interest.

For people who are visiting Marshalltown, business travelers, or adults and children who do not have a computer with a fast Internet connection at home, the library provides free, reliable Internet service. Just as importantly, the library offers assistance in navigating the Internet and subscribes to a variety of online databases to meet our patrons’ research needs.

The many progressive Iowa communities that have built new libraries during the past ten years – Ankeny, Newton, Waukee, Iowa City, Des Moines, Grundy Center, Burlington, Fort Dodge, Marion, Cedar Falls (to name a few) – are testament to the continuing need for public libraries.

**Where will the new library be located?**

On the north side of West Boone Street between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> streets – just one block west of the downtown Fisher office building.

**Who picked the location for the new library?**

A “Citizens’ Advisory Committee,” consisting of 17 community members, and library architects FEH Associates considered 22 locations when choosing the site for the new library. Several community meetings were held to consider the best place for the library. A site just northeast of the current library was selected, but it was discovered that the cost of acquiring the site and readying it for new construction was too expensive. When Fisher Controls offered to give the library property just west of Fisher’s downtown office building, the “Citizens’ Advisory Committee” recommended building the new library at the Boone Street location. After an environmental study found the site clear of environmental issues, the City Council accepted Fisher’s gift in October 2003.

**How can I find out what the new library will look like?**

Drawings of the proposed new library and a floor plan are on display at the library and in the “casebook” available on the library’s website ([www.marshalltownlibrary.org](http://www.marshalltownlibrary.org)).

**What will be available in the new library that is not available now?**

- 20 Internet stations instead of the 6 now available
- 38,970 square feet of space, double the current library
- One floor design and complete accessibility for persons with handicaps
- Ample parking on-site
- Public meeting room seating 150 people, dividable and able to be used when the library is closed
- 4 study rooms
- Youth programming space to accommodate 65 children
- Security system to deter theft
- Local history/Genealogy area with ample shelving and storage
- Young Adult area separate from children’s area
- Variety of comfortable seating and table areas
- Room in the new building to accommodate 20 years growth
- Planned expansion room on site should the library need to expand the building

**How much will the new library cost?**

The new library will cost \$8.65 million. That figure includes purchasing some additional property, developing the site, construction costs, architectural costs, furnishings, equipment, and moving expenses.

**How will the new library be paid for?**

The new library is a “private public venture.” A bond referendum will be held April 11, 2006 asking the citizens of Marshalltown to authorize the issue of not more than \$5 million in bonds. Contributions and grants will make up another \$3.25 million in funding. A small percentage of funding will come from non-bond city sources.

**How will the new library affect my taxes?**

Capital improvements in our city – like the aquatic center, street improvements, parks – are paid for with money generated from taxes. A portion of the funding for the new library (58% of the total) will come from property tax. The maximum impact for a homeowner whose house is assessed at \$75,000 would be \$19.08 annually. The maximum impact on a \$100,000 home would be \$25.44 annually and a \$150,000 homeowner would pay a maximum of \$38.16. Because the City has adequate debt capacity, the library project would not delay or prevent other projects like public buildings or streets from being built.

**Why doesn't the Carnegie Foundation pay for the new library?**

Andrew Carnegie gave the City \$30,000 in 1902 to build the original library building. The Carnegie Foundation no longer is in the business of building libraries. The library will apply for grants and these have been figured into the funding plan.

**Couldn't money be saved by making the new library smaller?**

The size and cost of the new library has already been reduced from 46,075 square feet at a cost of \$10 million to 38,970 square feet at a cost of \$8.65 million. Library staff and the Library Board of Trustees worked hard to plan a library that is “value engineered” -- giving Marshalltown a library that will accommodate the services and space our patrons need without unnecessary costs. The current library building has served Marshalltown for over 100 years, and we want to receive the same value for the initial cost when planning for the new library facility.

**Won't a new, bigger library cost a lot more money to operate?**

Not substantially more. The two largest expenses the library has are staff salaries and the cost of books and other library materials to check out to our patrons. These costs, which make up 80% of the library's expenditures, will remain unchanged. Because the new library is all on one floor and much more efficient, no additional staff will be needed to operate the new library even though we expect business will increase 30%. The materials budget will not be affected by our move to a new building. There will be some increase in the cost of heating, cooling, and lighting the new building but these will be partially offset by a new building's lack of large remodeling and maintenance needs.

**Can the library save energy costs by employing geo-thermal technology?**

Perhaps. Alliant Energy helped the library assess energy costs for the new library if it were to be conventionally heated and cooled. Soil conditions at the building site will need to be studied before determining if geo-thermal technology is an option. Installation costs, site conditions, and other factors will all be studied before making a decision about the best, most economical heating and cooling system.

**What's going to happen to the old Carnegie library building?**

The 1903 Carnegie library was designed in Beaux-Arts style by the Chicago architectural firm Patton and Miller. Architecturally and historically, the Carnegie building is a community treasure and it will not be demolished. The City of Marshalltown is the sole owner of the building, and city officials have done a good job maintaining the Carnegie building. The exterior is in very good condition. Plans are being made to continue the building's civic use, alleviating the crowding in the current City Hall by moving some departments into the Carnegie structure.

**How can I help secure a new library for Marshalltown?**

Contact one of the co-chairs on the "New Library for a New Century" committee for more information about the bond referendum and volunteer options. They are:

Susan Malloy 753-7628

Deb Tharp 753-8115

Janelle Carter 753-1171

If you are interested in making a tax-deductible donation to the project, Friends of the Marshalltown Public Library have established a building donation fund. Gifts can be directed to Friends in care of the Marshalltown Public Library. For more information, contact Friends President Susan Malloy (753-7628) or the Chair of the Gift Campaign, Floyd Harthun (752-0073).

**How can my organization or neighborhood group hear more about the project?**

Speakers are available to talk about the new library project. Call Library Director Carole Winkleblack at 754-5738 or stop by the library to schedule a presentation.

**When is the bond referendum and who is eligible to vote?**

The bond referendum is set for Tuesday, April 11, 2006. Because the library is a department of the City of Marshalltown, only registered voters who are residents of Marshalltown are eligible to vote in this election. The polls are open from 7:00 am to 8:00pm at the following locations:

First Ward – VFW Post 839

Second Ward – Iowa Veteran's Home Malloy Hall

Third Ward – Fisher Community Center

Fourth Ward – First Baptist Church

**Can I vote now?**

Eligible voters in the City of Marshalltown may cast an absentee ballot NOW by going to the Marshall County Auditor's Office at the Courthouse and voting in person. You can vote weekdays through Monday, April 10, 2006 until 4:30 pm

**Can I have an absentee ballot mailed to me?**

As in any election, registered voters may request an absentee ballot be mailed to them. Applications for an absentee ballot are available now at the Auditor's Office in the Marshall County Courthouse, at the public library, or online at

[www.co.marshall.ia.us/auditor/election](http://www.co.marshall.ia.us/auditor/election) or [www.sos.state.ia.us](http://www.sos.state.ia.us). The April 11 election should be specified on the application. Applications must be mailed or taken to the Marshall County Auditor's Office—they can be received no by the Auditor's Office not later than 5pm on Friday, April 7. An actual ballot will be mailed to you upon receipt of the application. For more information, call the Marshall County Elections Division at 754-6302.

**How do I register to vote?**

Registration forms and instructions are widely available, including at the public library, in the Auditor's Office at the Marshall County Courthouse, and online at [www.co.marshall.ia.us/auditor/election](http://www.co.marshall.ia.us/auditor/election) or [www.sos.state.ia.us](http://www.sos.state.ia.us). To vote in the April 11<sup>th</sup> election, you must be registered to vote no later than 5 pm Friday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. For more information, call the Marshall County Elections Division at 754-6302.