

A NEW LIBRARY FOR A NEW CENTURY

❑ **The library’s current facility is too small and inefficient.**

The Carnegie facility – built in 1903 – does not provide well for the library’s current level of service and cannot be adapted to accommodate expected growth. Library staff who are now “stretched thin” overseeing a 5 level building will have more time to help customers in a one floor, efficiently arranged new building.

❑ **Library use indicates a new library is needed.**

Marshalltown Public Library can demonstrate a steady increase in use that begs for a larger, better-equipped facility. Over 400 people visit the library each day. Additional customers call for information or access online databases, HeritageQuest among them, via the library’s website both in the library and at home.

	1995	1998	2001	2005
Circulation	135,026	174,614	168,084	200,652
Internet Log ons	0		7,896	24,878
Youth Program Attendance	5,116	6,153	7,488	10,113
Youth Book Circulation	50,203	57,753	57,722	68,970
Library Visits	57,980			126,880
HeritageQuest Online Searches	0	0	0	25,820

❑ **Our community needs affordable access to technology.**

Marshalltown provides free access to the technology so important to students, job seekers, visitors, business people . . . everyone in today’s world. A new library will offer customers 20 Internet stations (currently there are 6) and wireless access in a comfortable, quiet setting.

❑ **Downtown Marshalltown will be enhanced by the new library’s meeting room space.**

A flexible meeting room that seats 150 is just inside the door of the planned new facility. The meeting room can be divided into two, offers an attached kitchenette, and is designed for use even when the library itself is not open. The new building also offers four conference rooms for tutoring, quiet study, and small meetings.

❑ **Arts and culture programming are accessible to all in a library setting.**

Part of a library’s role is providing children, newcomers, and adults of all ages opportunities to explore our community’s history and culture as well as the wider world of arts and humanities. A wide variety of arts and culture exploration will be possible in a facility with a large meeting room, a special youth programming space, and easy access to genealogical and local history collections.

❑ **Good libraries build sound economies.**

Two 2005 studies demonstrate libraries’ economic benefit to regional economies. The State of Florida found libraries return \$6.54 for every \$1.00 invested and a South Carolina study showed a \$4.48 gain for every \$1.00 spent on public libraries. The Vision Iowa Board has weighed in on the economic importance of public libraries by funding 14 C.A.T. grants, as of September 2005, for new or renovated library buildings.

❑ **Prospective citizens and businesses demand communities with good quality of life. . . good libraries.**

It’s time for Marshalltown to join the many other progressive, forward-looking Iowa communities that have built new libraries in the past few years. Smart communities understand that to attract new families and new businesses, they must offer “quality of life.” An excellent library indicates a community that cares deeply about traditional American values like education, self-reliance, and respect for history and culture. Des Moines, Iowa City, Coralville, Waverly, Clarinda, Waukee, Urbandale, Marion, and Burlington all boast new libraries. Can Marshalltown afford to be left behind?