



THE
PUBLIC
LIBRARY
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PRESS RELEASE

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Library Board votes to retain ownership of Main Library North Building, additional levy in 2018

At a special meeting Wednesday evening, The Board of Trustees of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County voted to retain ownership of the Main Library North Building. The Library will re-purpose the North Building and maintain select services in that space. The decision will improve customer service and safety. There is no definite timeline for this process but it is expected to begin in 2018.

The Board began to explore options for the North Building in October 2016. “From the beginning, my fellow Board members and I exercised due diligence to ensure our final decision was made in the best interest of Library cardholders and staff,” said William J. Moran, incoming President of the Library Board of Trustees. “We’ve spent more than a year researching options for the use of the building—all ideas were on the table. We purposefully did not set a timetable for making a decision and we listened to input from the public and staff. I am confident the decision to maintain ownership and re-purpose the North Building is the best course of action.”

The Board also voted on Wednesday evening to place a new 1 mill levy on the ballot in May 2018. The money is needed to supplement the Library’s operations budget as state funding continues to decrease as well as to move forward with the Library’s Facilities Plan. This vision, the most significant building plan in the Library’s 160-year history, includes maintenance updates and renovations at many of the Library’s 41 locations. In addition, the Library will make five branches fully accessible to people living with disabilities: Cheviot, Madisonville, Price Hill, Walnut Hills, and Wyoming.

“At our current pace of funding, it will take 27 years to complete this work,” said Kimber L. Fender, the Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Director of the Library. “We are committed to working toward a more responsible timetable for updating, renovating, and maintaining our locations in all corners of Hamilton County in a fiscally responsible manner, one that puts the needs of all of our cardholders first.”

The special Board meeting announced for December 29 was cancelled. The community conversation for December 27 will take place as planned.

More information about the Facilities Plan is available by visiting CincinnatiLibrary.org/Facilities.

About The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County

The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County is one of the oldest, largest, and busiest libraries in the United States, serving a population of over 800,000 with a collection of more than 9 million items. In support of its mission of connecting people with the world of ideas and information, the Library also offers a wide variety of services and more than 20,000 free programs each year. For more information, visit CincinnatiLibrary.org.