

SIERRA MADRE LIBRARY

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I. NEW PROPOSED LIBRARY

A Library collection is a community asset. Information is powerful and expensive – but with a public library, we share its cost and use.

The new library responds to the needs of the community as follows:

- 1) **Location:** Since 1887, Sierra Madreans have been provided with library services from this same location. The new library has been designed for the existing site, with easy access for pedestrians, by local and public transit, angled, on-street parking (bringing the downtown feel to the west) and a parking lot south of the building.
- 2) **Building Size:** The new building will be 22,392 sq. ft., replacing the 8,762 sq. ft. 1955 building and will provide much-needed space for patrons to utilize collections, historical archives and attend community events.

Entering the new Library may be done from two entrances: Sierra Madre Blvd. from the north and Mariposa Ave. from the south. These 2 entrances provide easy and handicapped access to the library collections, programs, and services.

- 3) **Upper Level:** From Sierra Madre Blvd. on the north, you will enter the main service or upper level of the building. This is an open floor design. It is flexible on the interior so change in the future can be accommodated. Sight lines from service will eliminate the need for additional staff to supervise a larger facility.
 - a **Service Desks (2):**
 - ⇒ The Information Center - The main service desk will be easy to identify and centrally located.
 - ⇒ The Children's & Young Adult areas.
 - b **Reference:** This area is adjacent to the Information Center Desk. It will have books and databases to assist in answering questions, study tables and chairs, computer workstations for the catalog and databases and networked copiers and printers.
 - c **Computer Classroom/Lab:** Computer courses for seniors and others interested in expanding their computer skills will be taught in the lab with 10 networked student workstations, plus one for an instructor. During non-class hours, the lab will be used for the general public to access the Internet, databases, and reserve time for other computer related projects.
 - d **Children's Area with Service Desk:** Locating children's services in the southeast corner of the building will help to minimize noise to adult reading areas. It will not be staffed at all times, as it is at the present time.
 - e **Young Adult Area:** A library is a safe neutral place to gather. Teens need access to good information, programs and resources.
 - f **Adult Areas:** These areas will contain book stacks, comfortable seating, and a mountain view to the north. Adults will have opportunities to enjoy quiet time,

best sellers, and access up-to-date information to be used at the library or borrowed to take home.

- ⇒ Large Print books and magazines
- ⇒ Fiction
- ⇒ Non-Fiction
- ⇒ Media collections
- ⇒ Magazines
- ⇒ Computers

4) **Lower Level:** Entering the lower level will be easy from the Mariposa Ave. parking lot. An elevator and stairway will provide access to the upper/service level. When areas are not in use on the lower level, they may be secured while access to the upper/service level will be available.

a **Community Room:**

- ⇒ A planned capacity for up to 150 people, or it can be divided into 2 areas for smaller meetings.
- ⇒ It will safely and adequately hold the library programs:
 - (1) Preschool Storyhour
 - (2) Live Entertainment
 - (3) Summer Reading Club
 - (4) Teen Book Club
 - (5) Travelers and Collectors
 - (6) Author programs
 - (7) Live music programs.
- ⇒ It will be available to others for non-profit groups and private use.
- ⇒ It will be handicapped accessible.
- ⇒ The Community Room can be isolated and secured for after-hours use.

b **Local History Room:** Today the Sierra Madre Library is proud to be co-owners (with Sierra Madre Historical Preservation Society) and caretakers of the local history collection. In this room will be housed some of the true treasures of Sierra Madre: photos, newsletters, playbills, posters, and oral histories, to name a few. This will provide a secure and safe location for a growing collection in both size and importance.

c **Staff area:** This area will ensure safe shipping and receiving, a place for a break, and space to work. Staff offices, storage, and closed book stacks are also accounted for here.

d **Storage** – Compact shelving maybe installed to expand collections if needed.

e **Friends Gift & Bookstore** – A place for volunteers to gather, plan and promote library services; organize records; and raise funds to support the collections, programs, services, and equipment purchases of the Library.

5) **Q&A** about the design.

II. SUMMARY OF NEED

1) Physical Constraints:

a Space:

- ⇒ The existing square footage of the Sierra Madre Public Library is 8,762.
- ⇒ The database software used by libraries to determine needed square footage as required by the Bond Act of 2000 (Libris Design) evidenced that the needed square footage is 10,602. Our Library is 21% undersized for its collection and furnishings, and creates safety issues.
- ⇒ Designed/constructed in 1955 to hold 25,000 books – today it holds 56,000 volumes NOT including periodicals, audio books, CD's.
- ⇒ Meeting space – nonexistent; using reading rooms and children's room
- ⇒ Limited computer workstations
- ⇒ Limited Archives research and viewing
- ⇒ No dedicated Young Adult area

b Safety:

- ⇒ ADA access non-compliance:
 - (1) Check-out area
 - (2) Aisles are too narrow
 - (3) Access to restrooms is too steep
 - (4) Hallways to restrooms are too narrow
- ⇒ Parking area and walkway to entrance are too steep
- ⇒ Solid walls are inadequate to withstand an earthquake
- ⇒ Electrical, heating, plumbing are all at the end of their lifespan and are not up to code
- ⇒ Rodent infestation
- ⇒ Nonexistent building sprinkler system/fire suppression system
- ⇒ Fire Alarm and Security Alarm are worn out and need replacing
- ⇒ Inefficient indoor lighting
- ⇒ Inadequate and unsafe outdoor lighting

c Noise:

- ⇒ Levels are too high
- ⇒ Acoustics are very poor – no buffers between any rooms so noise travels uninterrupted

2) Service Constraints:

a Collections:

- ⇒ New books and multiple copies of favorites/high demand are restricted
- ⇒ Each addition requires elimination of an existing item

b Meeting room:

- ⇒ No dedicated space creates impediment on quiet study and reference rooms

c Restrooms:

- ⇒ Limited number

- ⇒ Inconveniently located
 - d **Local school visits:**
 - ⇒ Need larger meeting space
 - ⇒ Need larger collection
 - e **Volunteer space:**
 - ⇒ Current space issues give little or no ability to take advantage of the Library's numerous volunteers on-site.
- 3) **Liability Issues:**
- a Buildings are not code-compliant
 - b Earthquake could be severe (large retention falls upon City; EQ insurance not purchased)
 - c Trip & Fall exposure great due to crowding
 - ⇒ Employees' Workers' Compensation
 - ⇒ Liability of City
 - d Fire – no fire suppression system could result in great loss to collection (one of largest city assets)

III. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT THE SIERRA MADRE PUBLIC LIBRARY

1) Why are we talking about a new library?

- a According to the architect's study, a renovation and/or addition to the current structure would not provide adequate square footage to house the present collection, nor the space to provide other basic services.
- b A recent facility analysis indicated that renovation of the existing library would be functionally less desirable and probably more costly than replacing the structure with a building that better utilizes the site.
- c Renovation/addition to the current building would be just as disruptive to library patrons as construction of a new library.
 - ⇒ The original (1955) plumbing needs to be completely replaced
 - ⇒ HVAC (heating and air conditioning) unit and ductwork needs to be replaced due to age and inefficient design
 - ⇒ There are not enough restroom facilities
 - ⇒ Interior lighting is not energy efficient and exterior lighting is inadequate for public safety
 - ⇒ Electrical power system needs to be replaced because of the increased demands on power of current and future technology as well as simply due to the age of the existing service and wiring
- d The current 8,762 square feet library was built 50 years ago and was designed to hold 25,000 books. Our current collection is 56,000 volumes, which does not include periodicals, audio books, CD's, and other materials. The 1955 building is **21% undersized** to house the existing contents.
- e According to a community needs assessment and analysis of the current structure, additional space is also needed for Young Adults area, technology room with more computer workstations, a community meeting room, archives room to house and display local historical materials, and more adequate restroom facilities.

2) Why not add on to the existing 1955 library building?

- a The site's irregular shape and the substantial existing building setback from Sierra Madre Boulevard mean that maximum and most efficient use of space can only be achieved by demolition of the existing building
- b Both the option of adding a second story or a 2-floor addition to the south (rear) of the building were studied for cost and design feasibility, but neither alternative provided necessary usable space and both would require additional staffing to serve the public.
- c The existing building does not meet seismic standards. Exterior shear walls would need to be rebuilt to meet current code requirements to resist lateral movement

- d Basic functions such as plumbing and electrical systems are functionally obsolete and need to be upgraded even if the current configuration is maintained or if the library is expanded and renovated
- e Any significant addition to the library would trigger a requirement for fire sprinkler system (library currently does not have such a protection system)
- f Any significant addition to the library would also demand compliance with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements for access to library resources. This would entail installation of an elevator (if second story is added over current building or on south end of structure (presently parking area), widening of interior doorways, reconfiguration of book stacks (which may actually reduce shelf space), and replacement of circulation counter and reading carrels.

3) Why does the Community need a community room in the Library?

- a The library holds over 350 programs attended by over 10,000 people, young and old, every year
- b These library programs, such as Story Hour and Travelers & Collectors series, are held in cramped common areas within the library with people crowded into book stacks and sitting on the floor. There is no space for wheelchairs or accommodations for disabled patrons. Program hours are limited to non-public service hours, i.e. when library is closed for normal business, or simply conflict with regular library service
- c Lack of space has meant that people are being turned away from popular programs
- d The design of the 1955 library included a community room which was soon thereafter converted to today's children's room
- e Public events are difficult to schedule citywide because of the lack of a room with sufficient space for more than 50 people
- f Community groups and individuals would have an option for reserving an adequate meeting room within the city

4) Why do we need space for the Historical Archives?

- a The Library in partnership with the Sierra Madre Historical Preservation Society, has substantially improved the local history collection and its security and preservation
- b The local history collection is growing because of continuing donations of photographic images, documents and ephemera from private collectors and residents
- c The archives staff is recognized for their professional and public service
- d The California Room (present site for archives) was designed in 1955. It is now unsafe because of lack of workspace and storage area
- e There is not sufficient access for researchers and the public to use this unique and growing resource
- f Locating the archives within library optimizes access by the public to professional staff and other complimentary library resources. Housing this

collection at another site would entail increased staff and security costs and likely diminish access through reduced hours of availability

5) Why do we need space for technology?

- a Technology is an integral part of today's information society and an essential component of library services
- b Future changes in our library collection will be even more rapid over the next 50 years and space must be adaptable to accommodate the technology of the 21st century. New library is designed to provide flexibility to meet changing technologies
- c The Library Enhancement Technology Grant has improved residents' access to information since 2001 with a new City website, *which is maintained by Library staff*, a new library information system; access to information databases; and public computer and internet classes taught by library volunteers

6) How and where will the library provide public service during construction?

- a Library services will be available to the public at a reduced level whether the library building is demolished or undergoes a major renovation. The level and location of temporary library services will be decided after funding is secured and the construction timeline is revised.
- b Preliminary plans have been considered for accessing the collection to provide services with less than 20,000 items will be selected by staff for the temporary collection, including books, magazines and media.
 - ⇒ Library materials not at the temporary location will be placed in storage.
 - ⇒ Items selected for circulating collection will emphasize materials on popular and current topics and titles.
 - ⇒ Librarians will answer patrons' reference questions with access to online resources and basic ready reference books.
 - ⇒ Public programs (Preschool Story Hour, Teen Book Club and Travelers and Collectors) will be held at other locations within the City.
 - ⇒ Outreach to schools, institutions, and service organizations will be substituted for library visits by classes and community group meetings.
- c Preliminary criteria for a selecting a temporary location within the City will compare costs for leasing commercial space versus leasing and installing trailers and ramps.
- d Other issues which will be considered are:
 - ⇒ Accessibility and convenience for patrons in temporary library facility that can be managed by current staff
 - ⇒ Adequate foundation and substructure to support the weight of loaded book stacks
 - ⇒ ADA accessible entrances and restrooms
 - ⇒ Access to utilities including cabling for Internet and telecommunications.

- e An evaluation of options that may reduce the costs for storing the remainder of library materials or improve public library services during construction.

7) Will personnel and operating costs increase in the new, larger library building?

- a The new library was designed specifically to be operated by current staff by integrating technology and improved sightlines from the service desks
- b Additional library space will provide room for volunteers to assist professional staff
- c Energy costs will be approximately the same although interior space will be substantially more because of a more efficient HVAC system and energy-efficient lighting. In addition, there may be opportunities to use alternative energy sources, e.g. solar panels
- d Janitorial costs will approximately double because of increased floor area
- e Landscape costs will be about the same although incorporating drought-tolerant native plants may provide cost savings by decreasing maintenance and water costs
- f Ongoing building maintenance will be dramatically reduced by new construction versus upkeep on 50+ year old structure

8) Why should Sierra Madre build a new library when so many non-residents use it?

- a According to statistics from the Sierra Madre Public Library's automation system, 60% of items (books, magazines, videos, DVDs, etc.) are loaned to Sierra Madre residents
- b 55% of the patrons registered at this Library have a Sierra Madre address
- c Although not citizens of Sierra Madre, these non-resident patrons are involved in the community in other ways: business owners, school families, non-resident property owners and local shoppers.
- d Sierra Madre Public Library is a member of the Metropolitan Cooperative Library System (MCLS), an association of libraries from thirty-two (32) jurisdictions in the greater Los Angeles area that shares resources to improve library service to their residents as well as those from participating jurisdictions.
- e Sierra Madreans use neighboring public libraries as well: Brand Library in Glendale is renowned for its arts collection; South Pasadena Public Library is noted for their collection of plays and Pasadena Public Library has many business resources – all while the staff at the Sierra Madre Library receives many comments about the quality of our audio book collection (sponsored by the Friends of the Library) and the growing archives on local and mountain history.

IV. FINANCIAL CASE FOR NEW LIBRARY

Based upon the preliminary architectural designs and drawings, the cost of the new library building is estimated to be approximately \$6.5 million, with an additional cost of \$2 million for furniture, equipment, shelving, and other furnishings.

1) Lifespan:

- a Public buildings, such as libraries, normally have an expected useful life of 50 years. The existing Sierra Madre Library was completed in 1955. In practical terms, this means that the cost of maintaining and operating the existing structure will become more expensive as time goes by. For example:
 - ⇒ The current building is not energy efficient and as the cost of energy rises, so will the expenses of operating the library.
 - ⇒ There is no fire suppression system.
 - ⇒ The plumbing system is worn out.
 - ⇒ Similarly, the existing heating and air conditioning system is antiquated and frequently breaks down. They need to be replaced now.
 - ⇒ Other systems are likely to fail in the future.
- b Think of it this way: what do you do when your mechanic tells you it will cost \$2500 to fix a car with 300,000 miles on the odometer? It ceases to make economic sense to pour money into the existing structure when the funds could be invested in a new building designed to last another 50 years.

2) Bond:

- a A library is exactly the kind of project that the City should finance with a bond. The library is a capital asset of the community, owned by, and used by, everyone. The building will last well beyond the term of any bond, and well beyond the lifetimes of many residents. A small City like Sierra Madre will never have the resources to pay for a project of this magnitude out of unrestricted General Fund revenues. If you tried to save a little money each month from your paycheck in order to pay all cash for a home, you'd never move in.
- b The proceeds from the library bond will be used exclusively for the building, the "capital" portion of the project. Private philanthropy will provide equipment, furniture, and other furnishings, the less durable things with that will not last as long as a new building. The Friends of the Library will continue its long tradition of supplementing funds from the City for day-to-day programs.

3) History of Project:

- a In 1999, as part of the City-wide review of infrastructure needs, a Library Needs Assessment Committee was formed to evaluate the existing library building and determine future needs. Using generally-accepted guidelines for libraries, a new Library Plan was adopted in 2000 to meet the community's long term goals for library services.

4) **State Library Bond Act:**

- a In the same year, the voters of California approved the State Library Bond Act of 2000 (Proposition 14), which created a \$350 million fund for the construction and renovation of public libraries. The Bond program provided for three separate rounds of competitive applications, with awards made after each round. The Library Bond Act required cities to provide 35% as a local match, with the other 65% provided by the State as a grant. When the opportunity arose, the City purchased property behind the existing library so that the value of the land would count toward the local match requirement.
- b After passage of Proposition 14, the library planning process was expanded to include preparation of an application for the State Bond. Sierra Madre, like many smaller cities, did not apply in the first round because we wanted to be able to evaluate which projects were successful and prepare our application accordingly. The City appropriated money to hire architects, engineers, and library planning consultants, held public workshops, conducted surveys and completed the comprehensive application package in early 2003 and submitted it for Round 2 of the Bond allocation.
- c Applications in the first two Rounds were more than three times the amount of funds that were available. Prior to the Round 2 allocation, the State prepared an evaluation of Sierra Madre's application, and it did not rank well compared to other applications. Several selection criteria worked against the City's proposal, including the existence of a current library, the lack of population growth in recent years, and the inability of the school district to commit its own funds to the library joint use program. In November, 2003, we were notified that our application was not successful. While the news was disappointing, the process did produce a comprehensive needs assessment, a long term plan for providing library services, and plans and drawings that provide the basis for estimating the cost of constructing and furnishing a new library.
- d During the same period that the application for the State Library Bond was being prepared, the City aggressively pursued, and ultimately exhausted, all other alternative sources of funding for a new library. The Federal government does not fund these types of "brick and mortar" projects and there are no funds available from other levels of government.

5) Local Poll:

- a When the City learned that its bond application was unsuccessful, the City Council hired the Rose Institute of State and Local Government at Claremont McKenna College to conduct a survey of the community's views of the library. Using scientific polling techniques, data was collected on frequency of library use, reasons people used or didn't use the Sierra Madre library, etc. Asked if they were generally satisfied with the City's library services, 78% said yes, and 7 % said no.

- b The survey also included questions designed to test the willingness of voters to support an assessment to pay for the construction of a new library. These were "cold" calls, because at the time there had been no public education effort or promotional campaign to increase public awareness of the need for a new library. When respondents were asked if they would support an assessment of \$75 per household per year for 30 years, 48% said they would support the assessment, 38% said they would not, and 14% did not know. The resulting numbers provide a base line for judging the effectiveness for any public information campaign. Clearly there is work to be done. In order to be successful, a local library bond must receive at least 66 2/3% of the total votes cast.

6) Timing:

- a Finally, in spite of the continuing threats from the State to take away the City's operating revenues, this is the ideal time to borrow money for a library. Long-term interest rates are at their lowest point in 50 years, coincidentally the last time Sierra Madre approved a bond to build the current library. Compared to the rates of recent decades, the savings in interest costs would be enormous. Over time, natural inflation will reduce the real cost of an assessment, which can also be structured to provide relief to property owners with fixed or limited incomes as well as owners of commercial properties and vacant lots.

For all these reasons, supporting a bond to build a new library for Sierra Madre is a prudent investment in the future of our community.

V. FUNDRAISING

1) **After the Bond Issue Passes:**

- a After the successful election to authorize funding for construction of the new Sierra Madre Library, a fundraising campaign will be necessary to furnish and equip the new facility. While the construction of the new building can be financed over many years by a “Long Term Bond,” equipment and furnishings must either be provided through the City’s operating budget, or through private philanthropic support. The City’s “Budget Limitations” are well-known, thus leaving contributions from individuals, organizations, foundations and corporations the only alternative.
- b The cost of providing all the technology, furnishings and other necessary equipment for the new Sierra Madre Library is estimated to be \$1.5 Million. Given an acceptable fundraising cost, a campaign goal of around \$1.8 Million is probable.
- c Before the campaign can begin, a “Feasibility-Planning Study”, conducted by a firm with experience in fundraising for libraries, will be required. A “Request for Proposal” will be sent to qualified fundraising firms and one will be selected for the task by the Campaign Steering Committee.
- d The Campaign Steering Committee is composed of private citizens living in Sierra Madre all of whom are interested in making a new Library a reality and each of whom has made a commitment to personally support the project with a gift when the campaign begins.
- e Among the committee members are representatives of the City Council, The Volunteer Fire Department, The Friends of the Sierra Madre Library, The Sierra Madre Rotary Club, the Sierra Madre Kiwanis Club, the Civic Club, The Sierra Madre Historical Society, and members of the local clergy.

2) **Friends of the Sierra Madre Library:**

- a The major support organization for most of the history of the Sierra Madre Library has been the Friends of the Sierra Madre Library. “The Friends” conduct fundraising and “friend-raising” to support the current needs of the library including their annual Wine Tasting at the Alverno Villa, the Art Fair held in Memorial Park and quarterly Used Book Sales at the Library itself. The Friends’ Board of Directors, composed of numerous community leaders committed to the Library, has endorsed the project and the fundraising campaign. The Friends organization, as well as its individual members, will be asked to support the campaign. Indeed, the Friends have already made a significant contribution by paying for the development of the “Case for Support” and the “Campaign Video”.

3) **The Sierra Madre Community Foundation:**

- a The Sierra Madre Community Foundation, an affiliated fund of the California Community Foundation (the oldest Community Foundation in California) has agreed to accept contributions from the public in support of the library project. Restricted Funds will be established within the Foundation, which will allow donors to make specifically restricted contributions to the Library Project and obtain a charitable income tax deduction in the process.
- b Donors may restrict their contributions for technology, the “Children’s Room”, The Sierra Madre “Historical Archives” or any other portion of the project that may interest them.

4) **Recognition:**

- a Donors to the campaign will be recognized in the new library for their generosity. Donors of very large gifts may wish to place their name or that of a loved one on a specific part of the new facility. A “Major Donor Display” in the lobby will permanently recognize those whose gifts exceed a certain specified amount and those who make smaller gifts will be recognized through the use of “Bookplates” in Library volumes.

5) **How Will the Campaign Be Conducted?**

- a The plan for the campaign will be developed with the assistance of the firm that conducts the study. But, here are some things we know going into the campaign:
 - ⇒ Individuals make 90% of all the contributions made to charity in the United States each year. While we can expect some support from local businesses, area corporations and foundations located nearby, the vast majority of the support for the campaign will come from individual residents of Sierra Madre.
 - ⇒ More than 80% of the money will come from 10% of the donors. While it is our hope that everyone in Sierra Madre will want to make a gift of some size to the project, we will only succeed if we can convince people to make significant “major” gifts. While the Friends can be expected to be one of the “Major” donors, others will have to be located for us to succeed. These large gifts will be sought before the “Community” portion of the campaign begins.
 - ⇒ Multi-year pledges will be used to allow individuals to make larger gifts than they might otherwise be able to give.
 - ⇒ Broad-based community support is the key to gaining support from foundations. We hope to convince school children to become involved

in small fundraising projects for the library to help “Spread the Word” to the Community.

- 6) **Can I Make A Contribution Now?** We are so glad you asked that question:
- a If you would like to make a gift now you may do so by sending your check to the Sierra Madre Community Foundation, P. O. Box 716, Sierra Madre, Ca 91025-0716 and be sure to note that it is for the “Library Building Fund”.