



CONTACT:

Paula Krapf, PR and Marketing Manager pkrapf@gpld.org

Office: (630) 232-4806 Cell: (630) 725-8499

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Geneva Library Board of Trustees approves building resolution approving preliminary plan and cost estimate to construct new library

The Geneva Library Board of Trustees approved a preliminary plan and cost estimate to construct a new library at 210 S. 6th St. at their Nov. 17 meeting. The board will now work with architectural firm StudioGC to finalize the project scope and financial advisors Ehlers Financial to develop a financing plan, which will be reviewed at a public hearing Dec. 22.

The resolution, passed by unanimous vote, states that the board will raise \$24.9 million by issuing bonds to cover the cost of architectural services, construction, and furnishings for a new library. At that amount, the owner of a home valued at \$300,000 would see an increase of approximately \$110 per year on their tax bill. However, the building plans are in the early stages, said Library Director Christine Lazaris.

"The project scope will be based on community feedback following three community forums the board and architects conducted," she said. "Those forums provided a valuable opportunity for us to hear from our community. The board has not yet adopted a bond question because we wanted to get community feedback and incorporate those suggestions into our building plan." The goal is to have the final cost and square footage completed for the December hearing, when the board will decide whether to adopt a bond question for an April 2017 referendum.

"This is an exciting opportunity to invest in the future and build a library that offers the programs and resources our community needs," said Library board President Robert Shiffler.

The community forums, held Nov. 12 and 15, were the latest step in a process that began over a year ago to evaluate the condition and operating costs of the current library building and determine how to best serve the library district in the future.

The board concluded that it makes the most fiscal sense to build a new facility that offers the space and amenities the community needs. The library is landlocked at its current location, and community feedback has

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been clear that the library must provide additional services and resources, along with study space, meeting space, function rooms – and on-site parking. In addition, contemporary libraries are evolving to meet community needs by offering resources like drive-up convenience, 3-D printing services, craft rooms, equipment checkout, early literacy play areas, and more. Those services cannot be provided at the current location.

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