



Omaha
Public
Library



Omaha
Public
Library
foundation



Heritage
Omaha



For more information:

Carrie Murphy, City of Omaha,
402-444-3520

Emily Getzschman, Omaha Public Library,
402-444-4896

Sarah Baker Hansen, Emspace + Lovgren,
representing Heritage Omaha and Do Space,
402-210-9199

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MARCH 15, 2022

**OMAHA COMMUNITY INVITED TO PROVIDE INPUT ON
A NEW CENTRAL OMAHA PUBLIC LIBRARY AT 72ND AND DODGE**
In-depth public survey launches March 15

Omaha, Neb., March 15, 2022—Today, the City of Omaha; Omaha Public Library (OPL); Omaha Public Library Foundation (OPLF); Do Space and Community Information Trust; and Heritage Omaha are inviting public participation in the engagement phase of a potential new central public library.

The engagement phase, underway since January, is focused on listening to a variety of viewpoints ensuring that the design and service capabilities of a new central public library meet community needs. Input from the engagement phase will be used for decision-making in the design of a new central public library. Input gathering focuses on three key stakeholder groups:

- OPL leadership and staff from every library department and multiple Omaha library branches; Do Space staff and leaders; board representatives from OPL, OPLF and Do Space; philanthropic nonprofit Heritage Omaha; plus City Council and City of Omaha representatives, including the Mayor's Office.
- Omaha community partners representing diverse neighborhoods, communities and perspectives including social services, education, transportation, the arts, housing and the faith community, among others.
- The general public and library patrons.

A schematic design team comprised of Margaret Sullivan Studio (MSS), HDR and Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture (APMA) held meetings in January and February with Omaha Public Library and Do Space leaders and staff to gain a better understanding of library and patron needs. These input sessions involved every library department, and conversations centered on patron and space needs, services, technology, programs and ideas to inspire the best possible design for Omaha's current and future library offerings.

“The input from OPL and Do Space staff and leaders has been wonderful,” said Margaret Sullivan, principal of MSS. “We heard about a wide range of opportunities and needs, plus some terrific ideas, including the need for accessibility to the library’s extensive genealogy and local archives collections, community event space, creative ideas for lounge areas, co-working spaces and a vibrant café.”

More than 300 community partners leading organizations representing diverse neighborhoods, communities and perspectives are being invited to complete a survey on the proposed library. Many of these leaders will also have an opportunity to take part in one-on-one conversations or community partner breakfasts.

Members of the general public are invited to share their input during the engagement phase via a community survey and an upcoming event.

- A robust survey, designed by MSS, is being distributed throughout the community at all OPL locations and Do Space and can be accessed digitally at www.omahacentrallibrary.org on the connect page. Responses will be shared with the project partners and the design team to help inform decision-making on design and services, and input will be retained so that it can be considered in future master planning for the public library system. The survey will be available until April 15, and results will be shared on the central public library website by the end of April.
- An open-house-style public event, which will include more opportunities for input, will take place on Thursday, April 7 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at OPL’s A.V. Sorensen branch, 4808 Cass St., in the gymnasium. The family-friendly event will feature engaging activities arranged by Margaret Sullivan Studio and the design team. Registration details are available [here](#), and drop-ins are welcome.

“We’re pleased with the involvement and engagement to date, and we are looking forward to hearing more perspectives on the exciting possibility of a new, world-class public library at 72nd and Dodge,” Sullivan said. “We expect to be able to share more of the input received in May, where we’ll communicate what we learned and how it is impacting the design of the new central public library.”

For more information on other library facilities projects, visit the City’s [website](#).

###

[Omaha Public Library](#) (OPL) has served City of Omaha and Douglas County residents for 150 years and is one of the most visited institutions in Nebraska. OPL’s mission is to strengthen our community by connecting people with ideas, information and innovative services. Learn about OPL’s collections, facilities, services, programs and more at omahalibrary.org.

Founded in 1854, the [City of Omaha](#) has grown by 19 percent in the past decade to reach 486,051 residents calling Omaha home. The City of Omaha is principally responsible for the operational and capital funding, leadership and oversight of the Omaha Public Library (OPL) system.

The [Omaha Public Library Foundation](#) has raised more than \$10 million in private support for Omaha Public Library programs and services since its creation in 1985.

Founded in 2015, [Do Space](#) is the first technology library in the United States. Created by Heritage Omaha and operated by the Community Information Trust, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Do Space empowers the community through access to technology and innovative learning experiences. Do Space is a catalyst for innovation in Omaha. With more than 85,000 members and an average of 475 visits per day, Do Space is

uniquely equipped to expose community members to technology and to inspire them to take ownership of their digital learning experiences.

[Heritage Omaha](#) is a nonprofit organization committed to developing impactful philanthropic projects that enrich the Omaha community. Heritage identifies substantial needs or opportunities with high community impact and supports the realization of viable and sustainable civic projects.