



Libraries: Essential to the long-term health of communities

As affirmed by one of the world's leading social and civic think tanks, The Aspen Institute, "the long-term health of libraries is essential to the long-term health of the communities they serve." The Trustees of the Winter Park Public Library take our responsibilities very seriously to promote literacy, creativity, school and career readiness, culture and community engagement.

We want to share with you how proud we are of our 134-year history and how extremely excited we are about the library's future. Great and committed brains have been planning for our library's future for over a decade – caring residents, library executives, educators and national experts. In 2015, The Aspen Institute chose the Winter Park Public Library as one of only four among the more than 9,000 public libraries in the U.S. for a [hyper-local dialog](#) to help create the vision for our library. And, that included representatives from The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and Richard Adler, a Distinguished Fellow at the Institute for the Future.

Today, the current library is bursting at its seams to keep up with the demand for services. In our town of about 30,000 residents, the library lends nearly 500,000 books, periodicals, tablets and other borrowed materials, answers more than 100,000 questions through its research and technology desks, hosts 1500+ free early literacy, pre-school enrichment classes, tutoring, and college preparation classes, and helps hundreds of seniors archive family histories, apply for Medicaid, Social Security benefits and other social services.

The plans for the new [Winter Park Public Library](#) at The Canopy reflect the extraordinary experiences the community could hope for with 21st century learning resources for residents of all ages, incomes and abilities. In this much-needed new facility, the library will support the evolving educational needs of Winter Park.

Two often overlooked points we'd like to bring to the attention of readers of The Voice:

The Winter Park Public Library is an independent library that relies on charitable and private resources for about one-third of our library's operating and resource funding. We depend on community support to continuously improve our collections, hire expert librarians, add the latest technologies and host life-enriching classes.

What happens inside the library is what truly matters. Each day, 500 - 1000 residents discover, create and connect to new ideas, new resources and new friends at your Winter Park library. And, plans for inside of the new facility include countless improved and new spaces and services (stay tuned for details in a subsequent letter or see <https://www.wtpl.org/nextchapter>).

Inspire learning today and for the next generation by [sponsoring](#) a book, a class or a service at the Winter Public Library that is important to you and your family.

Sincerely,

Winter Park Library Association

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