

## New Northeast Regional Library project officially underway

*Mayor, community break ground on final of three regional libraries*



**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (September 21, 2017)** – With shovels in hand, Mayor Greg Fischer, Library Director Jim Blanton, Councilwoman Marilyn Parker, the Library Foundation, and members of the community officially broke ground today on the new 40,000-square-foot Northeast Regional Library located on Bellevoir Circle off Ormsby Station near the Northeast YMCA.

The Northeast Regional Library is similar in size and scope to the recently built Southwest and South Central Regional libraries and is the final of three regional libraries included in the Louisville Free Public Library’s Master Facilities Plan. Replacing the much-smaller Westport branch (located in Westport Middle School), the Northeast Regional Library will enhance service for more than 170,000 people in eastern Jefferson County.

“The Northeast Regional Library will bring resources for education and lifelong learning to a part of Jefferson County in which the demand for the Library’s services has outstripped its resources,” said Mayor Fischer. “And I’m really pleased that when this Library opens, my administration will have fulfilled our commitment under the Library Master Plan to provide a full-service library within five miles of 90 percent of Louisville residents.”

Library patrons in the Northeast service area checked out more than 1 million books and other materials in the last fiscal year —representing nearly 25 percent of the library system’s total annual circulation. And of the 170,000 residents within this service area, 40 percent are active library cardholders. Despite this tremendous use, the northeast region of Jefferson County falls well below state library standards. The new Northeast Regional Library will more than double the area’s square footage per person.

“I am very excited to see the Northeast Regional Library break ground, fulfilling the ambitious library master plan developed by the partnership of Metro Government and the Library Foundation and propelled forward by the state’s \$4 million contribution to the project,” said District 18 Councilwoman Marilyn Parker. “This new library will replace one of the most utilized libraries in the system, adding much needed capacity for this area and a host of new amenities with more community meeting space, expanded materials collections, and the latest

technology. This project will be complemented by the major improvements being made to the adjacent A.B. Sawyer Park, so families can easily walk between the new library, the YMCA, and the park.”

The state-of-the-art building will feature an expanded collection, including more bestsellers, DVDs, large type, and books for children and teens, and will provide the latest technologies. The design will include comfortable, quiet spaces for reading and studying, several meeting rooms, an auditorium, a large children’s area, and a separate teen space. New to LFPL, the Northeast Regional also will feature an innovative, hands-on “makerspace” with audio/visual lab and demonstration kitchen, plus outdoor teaching and programming space.

“The Northeast Regional Library will be a hub for educational and community engagement and a cultural centerpiece,” said Library Director Blanton. “Its location near the Northeast YMCA, U of L Shelby Campus, 70 independent cities and municipalities, and more than 50 schools will provide convenient access to a vibrant community, eager for improved library services, collaborative events, and robust programming.”

The design team includes JRA Architects of Louisville, Meyer Scherer & Rockcastle Ltd. of Minneapolis, MKSK of Ohio, and staff from the library.

All aspects of the building’s design have been planned to incorporate advanced, eco-friendly technologies and architectural design to save energy, reduce waste, and improve quality of life. In addition, LFPL is committed to preserving the scenic beauty of the site and to minimize environmental impact. The landscape plan will include adding more trees, walking paths, and usable outdoor spaces to take advantage of the site’s park-like setting.

The total price tag for construction, books, computers, and furnishings is estimated at \$17.8 million, with \$14 million coming from Metro government and the state, and the additional \$3.8 million to be raised from private donors through the Library Foundation. To date, the Foundation has raised 60 percent of its goal, including gifts of \$500,000 from the City of Lyndon and \$200,000 from LG&E/KU. Library Foundation vice-chair Bill Dunbar also announced today a \$400,000 challenge grant made by The James Graham Brown Foundation.

“It is because of the support of organizations like the James Graham Brown Foundation, LG&E/KU, and the City of Lyndon, and passionate community members just like you, that we can make more possible at LFPL,” said Dunbar. “I thank you and our community thanks you for helping make the Northeast Regional Library a reality.”

“Bringing a larger, more updated library to East Louisville has been a priority since joining the Metro Council,” said District 17 Councilman Glen Stuckel. “Early on I worked with the LFPL director to find viable sites for a regional library. Although those didn’t turn out to be the final location, my desire to make this idea a reality has never waned. I am excited the time has finally arrived. The educational and recreational resources available through this project will provide outstanding opportunities for residents of all ages.”

Construction of the Northeast Regional Library is to be completed in early 2019.

**What other Metro Councilmembers had to say about the new Northeast Regional Library:**

“Libraries are an important cornerstone of a healthy community. I am excited for this new edition to the Louisville Free Public Library system in Northeast Louisville. This amazing library will give people the opportunity to find jobs, experience new ideas, get lost in wonderful stories all while providing a sense of place for gathering as a community. I am especially thankful that funding for several different features to be included as part of the Northeast library have come through partnerships with some of the suburban cities in this area.” – **Angela Leet, District 7**

“Lifelong learning is so important to our community and I am happy to see the third of the three regional libraries break ground. The Northeast Regional Library will serve a huge part of Louisville Metro. I am grateful to everyone for their efforts in making it happen and especially thankful for the work of the Library Foundation, which has done so much to make each of the regional libraries come to pass.” – **Bill Hollander, District 9**

“As a teacher, I understand how the need for — and use of — free public libraries have evolved. These gems have been supported all across America dating back to a time before the Declaration of Independence. Benjamin Franklin and friends opened the first lending library in Philadelphia in 1731. Modern libraries serve a much more diverse population with services unforeseen just a generation ago. I am very proud of the work done by the Friends of the Library, and am really grateful to see that the Northeast regional library will be built in accordance with the library master plan.” – **Kevin Kramer, District 11**

“I’m very pleased that this much needed library will soon be available for public use. It will be a valuable resource to those seeking knowledge in this Information Age and I am proud to have supported its funding.” – **Scott Reed, District 16**

“This library will be a wonderful addition for our community. It will increase multiple opportunities for children and adults alike.” – **Julie Denton, District 19**

“As a Metro Councilman, it is exciting to see the hard work and dedication to expanding our library system come to fruition. This new library is furtherance of our commitment to expanding learning resources throughout our Metro.” – **Brent Ackerson, District 26**

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*Louisville Free Public Library connects the residents of Louisville and Jefferson County to knowledge and information at our 18 locations and on the web at [LFPL.org](http://LFPL.org). Come on in, the whole world’s inside.*