

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE NEW CANBY PUBLIC LIBRARY/CIVIC CENTER PROJECT

Canby's City Council has scheduled a meeting on April 17 to discuss several options for the library/civic center project, including proceeding with the project, reallocating funds to other Urban Renewal projects, or selecting a different site for the new library. Below are answers to questions that community members are asking in relationship to this discussion.

1. Why was the Second Avenue site chosen for the new library?

In early 2012, Canby's Urban Renewal Agency commissioned a study from FFA Architecture and Interiors that evaluated two potential sites for the new library: an expansion of the existing site (On third Street from Holly to Ivy, often referred to as the "Third Avenue Site") and on Second Avenue between Holly and Ivy streets (the "Second Avenue site"). Working with a library planning committee that included members of the community, city and library staff, FFA's report concluded that Second Avenue site was a better choice for multiple reasons.

- **Construction costs at Third Avenue site would be higher.** If the footprint was expanded and a second story was added (for city administrative offices), the estimated cost of renovation would be \$13.75 million, more than the \$10.5 budget of the currently approved project on 2nd Avenue.
- **Cost of purchasing needed property for Third Avenue site would be higher.** Developing the Third Avenue site would involve purchasing four different pieces of property vs. acquiring one lot on Second Avenue.
- **A two story library on the library's current footprint would be more expensive and less safe to operate** because it would require additional staff on the second floor for operations and security.
- **Costs of temporary space for city functions during construction would be higher with the Third Avenue site.** If a second story were placed on the existing library building, it would be necessary for the library to move out during construction. Because over 50,000 books and other items are involved, this would be more expensive than temporarily relocating the city's administrative offices (as is the current plan for the Second Avenue site).
- **Third Avenue site would take four pieces of private property off the tax rolls,** which is of concern to some council members. In contrast, the Second avenue site would not reduce the amount of commercial property downtown.
- **Third Avenue site does not address the issue of what to do with Canby's historic city hall.** In contrast, the Second Avenue site restores this landmark so that it can continue to be enjoyed by the community for civic uses.
- **Third Avenue site has less access to public parking,** while the Second Avenue site is close to First Avenue parking.
- **Third Avenue site would be less successful in supporting the city's economic development goals.** When compared to the Third Avenue site, the Second Avenue site will better support downtown businesses because it is in closer proximity to them.
- **Third Avenue site would do a poorer job of accommodating the library's space needs.** An entryway on the short end of the building (Holly Street for the Third Avenue site) vs. a long side of the building (as it is on the Second Avenue site) creates challenges in laying out the library efficiently. Additionally, a second story over the library on the Third Avenue site (for city administrative offices) would mean that the expansive, high-ceilinged civic space of the design for Second Avenue design would be eliminated.
- **Community response to the design for the Second Avenue library has been enthusiastic.** At three well-attended meetings in January and February, community members were overwhelmingly positive.

2. If the Second Avenue site is rejected in favor of the Third Avenue site, what is the cost to the city?

To date, the city has spent over \$350,000 for project management and architectural design alone; there are other costs as well. If the decision to site the library on Second Avenue site is reversed, this investment would be lost.

3. If the City Council decides to reverse the decision to build the new library on Second Avenue, what would happen next?

Since there are many unknowns, much work would need to be undertaken before the City would have a plan to proceed. Examples include: contracting with an architect to further study the site and develop a detailed cost estimate, exploring whether the four pieces of property on the proposed site are for sale, and negotiating a price for these properties.

4. If the Second Avenue site is rejected in favor of the Third Avenue site, what would be the impact on the \$1 million fundraising effort by library staff and volunteers?

At this time, approximately \$500,000 in grant requests have been submitted to foundations, corporations and other potential supporters of the new library. Per the requirements of these funders, these proposals are site specific and include a budget and timeline. If the Second Avenue site is rejected by the City Council, all of these requests will need to be immediately withdrawn until the city again has a firm plan in place for a new library. It is anticipated that withdrawing these proposals will not have a positive effect upon the library's chances of receiving funding in the future.

5. I thought that the decision was already made to move forward with the new library on Second Avenue. What has changed?

On August 22, 2012, Canby's Urban Renewal Agency voted to approve the Second Avenue site for the new library. Since then, the City has hired a project manager and architects, held three community meetings to review the plans for the new library, and submitted applications to major foundations and other funders to help reach the project's \$1 million fundraising goal. Under the current schedule, the library/civic center is scheduled to break ground this summer and to open in late 2014, and the new city administration building, which will be housed in the renovated library building, will open in early 2015. The current City Council/Urban Renewal Agency's discussions about the future of the project are being held at the request of several of its members.