

**County of Lancaster
Request for ARPA Funding**

Organization Lancaster Public Library

Date 07/19/2022

Submitted By Lissa K. Holland, Executive Director

Authorized Signature 

Email Address 

Phone #: 

Please attach any supporting documentation for consideration. Submission should be in PDF Format.

Project/Item Description

Lancaster Public Library respectfully requests \$500,000 in ARPA Funding from Lancaster County to address COVID's negative economic impact on the project and to create a new Business Center as a successor to the popular Duke Street Business Center. This essential resource for workforce and economic development is accessible to all county residents, including those most in need of assistance. ARPA funds would help upgrade a place that not only helps the tens of thousands of people who use the library on their own for business development and worker skills each year, but also countless other people who are being served by county nonprofits that use LPL and its services for business and workforce development.

This project is creating a new, improved, more accessible Lancaster Public Library (LPL) in the heart of downtown Lancaster, across Queen Street from the Lancaster County Government Center. It moves the county's largest public library closer to a public transportation hub, makes the entire facility ADA accessible, and will be more convenient for underserved audiences that need our resources the most. The new library will be brighter and will have more usable space than our current location, with updated technology and spaces designed for modern library patrons. Like new downtown libraries nationwide, it will attract tremendous foot traffic and complement neighboring retail and cultural destinations.

In recent years, Lancaster Public Library's story has been one of striving to be a 21st-century library in a 20th-century building. Our 69-year-old home at 125 N. Duke St. has been demanding far too much time and money. Expensive facilities issues (flooding, mold, broken elevator, HVAC problems) have diverted substantial funds away from serving patrons. The situation is simply unsustainable.

Our users have been asking for a better facility for years, reflecting the fact that portions of our 1953 building were last renovated more than 40 years ago. A 2016 online survey of one thousand Library patrons and non-users asked, "How can Lancaster Public Library improve in the future?" The second most frequent answer was "Expand/update library facilities." It was topped only by "Expand book/resource collections." The Library also conducted focus groups with patrons, families, volunteers, board members, and staff to identify the elements people most wanted in a new library. Their most frequent responses: a brighter, more welcoming environment, comfortable places to read, access to meeting spaces of various sizes, and spaces where children could be loud and active.

The new LPL will be designed for how people work, learn, and interact today, incorporating features requested by the focus group participants. Study rooms in which up to 4 people can work as well as various size meeting rooms for larger groups will be available. Users will have greater access to information through technology and to librarians to help guide their searches. The second floor will reflect our commitment to the community's youth. Glass walls will frame the children's library on one side and a new separate space for "tweens" and teens on the other. The dynamic and engaging children's space will encourage reading and family time, hands-on learning, group play and will include flexible open spaces for educational programs, such as STEM-focused classes. For the young adults, having their own clearly dedicated space will enable them to work and interact with one another in their own environment.

The design plans call for best-practice features not found (or not possible) in our current building. In terms of accessibility, there will be no steps at the main entrance. During operating hours, elevators from the parking garage above will open into our lobby. The entire facility will be accessible to a person in a wheelchair and a stroller parking area will be available outside the children's library. In terms of energy efficiency, a modern climate

	<p>control system will keep patrons and staff comfortable while ensuring the long-term preservation of LPL’s valuable collections. Windows and doors will be far more energy efficient than what we have now. Lighting fixtures will use LEDs. The new facility truly will be a modern library.</p> <p>Construction of the new library is well underway. A community fundraising effort is working to raise the final \$2.2 million of the project’s \$10 million cost. ARPA funds from Lancaster County will be among the last in and will help ensure the new Lancaster Public Library’s successful completion.</p>
<p>Estimated Cost – how cost was derived & provision of partner funds (who is providing, how much and show commitments).</p>	<p>The project’s cost has been derived from a Guaranteed Maximum Price Summary Cost Comparison dated March 8, 2022, from Benchmark Construction, the project’s general contractor. Design costs were provided by Hammel Associates Architects, the project’s architect. Furnishings costs were obtained through market research and technology costs came with assistance from Library System of Lancaster County tech support. Financing fees were determined by Fulton Bank, the project’s lender. Campaign and marketing fees and the goal for an increased endowment were provided by Lindsley Development Consulting, our capital campaign consultant. The cost for moving the library’s collections was obtained from an experienced library relocation company. The project’s cost totals \$10,000,000.</p> <p>State grants totaling \$3,250,000 have been awarded to LPL, providing a third of the project’s total cost. A bipartisan group of Lancaster County legislators including Rep. Mike Sturla, Sen. Scott Martin, and Rep. Bryan Cutler successfully lobbied Governor Wolf for a Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) grant of \$2,500,000, the largest award in LPL’s history. The Library has also received \$750,000 from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund’s Grants for Public Library Facilities, the maximum amount awarded. These sizable investments in a Lancaster County project reflect both its importance and the confidence of our state partners in LPL’s ability to complete the new library successfully.</p> <p>The Library has committed \$3,500,000 of our own resources to the project. While part of that amount is remaining dollars from a previous capital campaign, the majority comes from the anticipated proceeds of the sale of our current building at 125 N. Duke St. Our financial capacity to move forward with this project has been bolstered by signing a sales agreement with a group of investors with strong ties to the community. This group has committed to purchasing the building for ultimate use by St. James Episcopal Church. The Settlement Date will be in May, 2023, although the Library has the option to extend that date in 90-day increments if it is not able to “simultaneously relocate to a new building currently under construction for its use.” The agreement, which was finalized March 23, 2021, and for which all due diligence has been completed, provided the collateral needed to obtain bridge financing for construction.</p> <p>To raise the remaining dollars, the Library has hired Todd Lindsley and James Alton of Lindsley Development Consulting to assist Director of Development Jamie Hall in planning and implementing the capital campaign. The Library launched <i>Fabulas: A Campaign for Lancaster Public Library’s Next Chapter</i> in October 2020. (<i>Fabulas</i> is inspired by the Latin word for <i>stories</i>.) A 16-member Campaign Steering Committee led by board member and Campaign Chair, Henrietta Heisler, owner of Henrietta Heisler Interiors, is spearheading the cultivation and solicitation of potential major donors. To date, the <i>Fabulas</i> Campaign has raised \$7,850,000 of the \$10,000,000 goal.</p>
<p>Which County ARPA Community-wide Benefit(s) does the project meet?</p>	<p>This project meets A-5, Work force development, noted in the Lancaster County Community Requests for ARPA Funding Guideline.</p>

Briefly explain how the project meets the County's guidelines.

For Lancaster County residents who are unemployed or underemployed, Lancaster Public Library is a gateway to lifting themselves up to a better life. Here they can access technology and resources that can help them become a bigger part of the region's workforce. This new public library for Lancaster County also meets the County's guidelines in being a once-in-a-lifetime capital project that requires one-time funding. No additional dollars will be needed for the library's construction, and all funds received from the County will be directed toward construction costs, technology, fixtures, furnishings, equipment, or design fees. The County of Lancaster will be among the "last-in" funders, as our other partners will provide 95% of the project's cost. We ask the County to provide just 5% of the total project cost.

Why should this project be a priority and how will it help the County? Also, if this application is for more than one project, please identify each one, provide information and rank them in order of your priority.

The new Lancaster Public Library should be a County priority because of the vital roles LPL plays in the development of the county's workforce, whether for individuals hunting for a job or for businesses and entrepreneurs looking to create jobs. Staff at PA CareerLink send jobseekers to LPL not only to access specific databases that are only accessible through LPL, but also to use our public computers to fill out online job applications. Sometimes these individuals need such basic information as learning how to use a computer mouse or scan an application—assistance our professional librarians provide. Other individuals use our computers and resources to create a resume. Not everyone has access to a computer or the Internet at home.

For years, consulting LPL's Duke Street Business Center (DSBC) has been a required step for entrepreneurs working with mentors from SCORE and ASSETS. The DSBC provides free access to powerful proprietary databases, such as First Research, D&B Hoovers, and SimplyAnalytics. Professional librarians are available to help entrepreneurs search for information on market data, client demographics, competitors, and consumer or industry trends. Nonprofits can identify potential new funding sources on Foundation Directory Online. From 2019 through 2022, 466 people have participated in a DSBC program on starting or running your own business, and 202 have taken DSBC computer classes. These numbers do not reflect the numerous other patrons who just come into the Library to access the above mentioned specialized business databases or to have a private business search session with a professional librarian. Our professional librarians work closely with SCORE, ASSETS, and the Lancaster City Alliance. Many thriving local businesses got their start at the DSBC, and its resources continually nurture Lancaster's economic prosperity.

Although our pre-school patrons may be too young to start their own business, they are not too young to begin learning about various job opportunities as well as the benefits of placing money in a piggy bank. LPL has invested in our youngest patrons by adding a new professional librarian to our Children's team who specializes in early childhood literacy. Our young patrons are Lancaster's future. Therefore, we believe in helping them prepare for their future by holding educational programs for various-age children. Partnering with a local bank to talk about the importance of saving money and providing a plethora of STEM-related programs are just some of the life-prep opportunities available in the Library for our younger patrons.

This project should also be a County priority because Lancaster Public Library is an essential community resource. In a county with 500,000 residents, LPL serves 350,000+ visitors, circulates 700,000+ pieces of material, including books, audiobooks, and DVDs, and provides 3 million free electronic retrievals of information on subscription-based databases in an average year. Our public computers and Wi-Fi log 60,000 sessions every year while our professional librarians answer 26,000+ reference questions. We have 53,000 active library card holders. Half of these patrons live outside Lancaster City. During COVID, we pivoted to providing resources and programs online, resulting in a surge of use of Overdrive and

	<p>Hoopla, our online book and movie platforms. The attached fundraising brochure provides a broader look at the benefits of this project to library patrons and the community at large.</p> <p>Further proving the widespread usage of public libraries, a December 2019 Gallup poll found that libraries remain the most common cultural activity in America by far, surpassing going to a movie or a live sporting event. Americans on average visit a library nearly monthly. According to Gallup’s data, young adults, women, and residents of low-income households utilize libraries the most. Our patrons mirror that pattern.</p> <p>Finally, this project should be a priority because Lancaster Public Library serves everyone in our community, regardless of who they are or what they have. In our home municipality, Lancaster City, nearly all census tracts are characterized by having predominantly Low to Moderate Income households as a percentage of Area Median Family Income, according to U.S. Census data. In fact, 23.9% of residents live in poverty. In the School District of Lancaster, 86.9% of students qualify as economically disadvantaged. City residents depend on this library to access essential resources and services.</p> <p>Freedom of information and inquiry are essential to democracy and our quality of life. No other organization provides these rights to our community like Lancaster Public Library.</p>
<p>Will this project require ongoing expense (maintenance, updates) or frequent replacement? Are expenses already being incurred, if so, can they be reduced through this project?</p>	<p>The majority of Lancaster Public Library’s annual operating expense is covered by fundraising—in fact, nearly 70% of the Library’s budget. Building the new Lancaster Public Library will not require any ongoing expense.</p> <p>This project is a true financial game-changer for the Library. Thanks to the Lancaster Parking Authority’s community-minded invitation to LPL to anchor the new nine-floor Christian Street Parking Garage, the Library will go from owning an aging building with significant maintenance and repair costs to being a tenant in a rent-free space. The Parking Authority is providing LPL a 99-year lease with a term of \$0 per year rent. This once-in-a-generation opportunity enables the Library to avoid an unsustainable future and devote more funds to staffing, services, and resources. Our facility costs will be reduced to utilities and maintenance in a new energy-efficient building. Our facility and our organization will be better able to serve our community.</p>
<p>Project Timeline – start to finish, and when funding will be needed.</p>	<p>Work has already begun on the Library’s 43,000-square-foot space. Construction is expected to be completed by early 2023. Moving the collections and preparing to welcome patrons will require most library services (except those online) to be unavailable for about a month. We anticipate a soft opening late in the first quarter of 2023 and a celebratory ribbon cutting in April 2023.</p> <p>Funding will be needed in the fourth quarter of 2022. ARPA funds from Lancaster County will not only support construction and furnishing costs but will also reduce the project’s need for bridge funding, saving valuable dollars. All funds will be expended well in advance of ARPA deadlines.</p>
<p>Are there other organizations a part of this project? If yes, please list them and their role, including funding. If not, explain why?</p>	<p>The Lancaster Parking Authority represents our primary partner (and soon-to-be landlord) in this project. The Parking Authority’s invitation to anchor its garage’s presence on Barney Ewell Plaza is a true gift to the community.</p> <p>The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and numerous foundations and individuals have committed to being part of this project as funders:</p> <p>Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program \$2,500,000 Keystone Grant for Public Library Facilities \$750,000 Richard J. Blakinger in memory of Barbara Blakinger \$500,000</p>

	<p>Forest Path Foundation \$500,000 Estate of Donald Witmer \$203,699 The High Foundation \$100,000 Other gifts/pledges from foundations: \$200,000 Other gifts/pledges from individuals: \$640,000 Invitations to businesses to support the project will begin in fall 2022.</p> <p>As thanks for a grant of \$500,000 in ARPA funds, the Library will offer the County the opportunity to select an appropriate naming opportunity, if the Commissioners so desire. A list of the naming opportunities available is attached to this application. The County of Lancaster will be recognized with signage adjacent to the selected space, on signage throughout the Library, and on maps. In addition, the County of Lancaster will be listed on a beautiful, permanent major donor wall to be installed in the first floor lobby.</p> <p>A public library is a community hub, a place where all are welcome, a space owned by everyone. This project creates a place that will enhance the lives of Lancaster Countians for generations to come. It provides new inspiring spaces for our children and youth to learn and grow. We hope the County of Lancaster will choose to help write an exciting next chapter in the story of the Lancaster Public Library.</p>
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ARPA Committee Comments	
ARPA Committee Recommendation	
Funding Amount Recommended (if recommended for approval)	\$