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Mid-Continent Public Library Breaks Ground in Lee’s Summit

Groundbreaking Ceremony on May 10 Kicks Off Construction of New Library Branch

Lee’s Summit, MO – Mid-Continent Public Library is proud to announce that it will host a groundbreaking ceremony on Friday, May 10, at 9:30 a.m., in Lee’s Summit, Mo., marking the start of construction on a brand new branch—its third in the city. Acquired by the Library in September 2018, the property where the new branch will reside is located at SE Battery Drive and SE Blue Parkway (across from the Addington Place retirement community at 2160 SE Blue Parkway). The ceremony on Friday will include remarks from Library leadership as well as local officials prior to the groundbreaking.

“We’re eager to begin work on this new branch, which we hope will be an incredible resource to our customers in the city of Lee’s Summit,” said MCPL Director and CEO Steven V. Potter. “Residents reinvested in the Library when they passed Proposition L in 2016, and now the Library is proud to reinvest in this thriving community.”

The new East Lee’s Summit Branch, as it will be known, will offer a wide array of amenities and upgraded technology throughout the 18,500-square-foot building, including:

- Community programming room for classes and forums
- Enclosed meeting/study rooms
- Designated teen area
- Children’s area—the “Richard and Deborah Link Learning Center” (dedicated to the prior owners who generously donated a portion of the property)

“Our libraries are busier than ever, providing connections to technology, access to books and movies, community meeting spaces, and valuable programs to assist people with employment, health, and the digital landscape,” said Lee’s Summit Mayor Bill Baird. “The addition of the East Lee’s Summit Branch will enhance our community infrastructure, bringing more opportunities and resources for education, quality of life, and cultural enrichment. I urge all residents to visit a public library and see for themselves the amazing library of today.”

Construction of the East Lee’s Summit Branch is scheduled to be complete by mid-2020, and the two current MCPL branches in Lee’s Summit—off Oldham Parkway and Colbern Road—will remain open as it is built. Collectively, the two existing MCPL branches in Lee’s Summit circulated more than one million items during the last fiscal year (putting them at #1 and #3 in terms of circulation out of MCPL’s 31 branches). Additionally, they had more than 330,000 visitors in their buildings last year. The new East Lee’s Summit Branch will help the Library better meet the needs of this growing community.
The new Library branch is part of MCPL’s Capital Improvement Plan, which it launched following the passage of Proposition L in 2016, giving the Library its first increase in funding in more than 30 years. As part of the Capital Plan, all 31 MCPL branches will be improved in some way, and two new branches will be built (including the East Lee’s Summit Branch), by the end of 2022.

While the upgrades at each branch vary based on individual community needs and the building’s current condition, the Library’s goal is to create more intentional spaces such as community and meeting rooms, as well as upgrade essential technology like computers, printers, and high-speed Wi-Fi. The Library is working with Sapp Design Architects, Helix Architecture + Design, and JE Dunn to complete all of the work in the Capital Plan.

In addition to all the physical upgrades, the increased funding approved by voters in 2016 allowed MCPL to expand branch hours, enhance special services, augment early literacy efforts, and buy more books, movies, and music.

More information about the East Lee’s Summit Branch and all of the Library’s construction projects can be found online at mymcpl.org/Community.

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*Mid-Continent Public Library* is the largest library system in the Kansas City metropolitan area, operating 31 branches and two Library-To-Go locations and serving more than 800,000 people in Jackson, Clay, and Platte Counties. The Library strives to enrich our citizens and communities through expanding access to innovation, information, ideas, and inspiration. MCPL is a 2014 National Medal for Museum and Library Service winner. Connect with the Library on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.