



City of Arts & Innovation

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City of Riverside Seeks Community Input on New Main Library

Public meetings are scheduled for June 15 and July 21 at Riverside City Hall

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside is seeking input on what the community would like to see in a new Main Library. Public meetings are scheduled for 5 p.m. June 15 and July 21 in the Art Pick Council Chamber at Riverside City Hall, 3900 Main Street.

The meetings come as the Riverside Public Library is beginning the process of designing a new Main Library, which has been a topic of discussion for more than a decade. The Riverside City Council recently selected Los Angeles-based architecture firm Johnson Favaro to design a new building on the site of the former bus station at 3911 University Avenue, between Mission Inn and University avenues, west of Market Street.

The \$30 million project will create a new, 45,000-square-foot Main Library that offers a modern library experience in the heart of downtown Riverside through enhanced public space, including flexible space for reading, collaboration, research, meeting space, and community programs.

“Libraries have evolved into information centers that serve everyone from young children checking out their first books to adults who are looking to re-enter the workforce,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “Riversiders of all ages can look forward to an amazing place that focuses on exploration and innovation.”

The new space will embrace traditional reading, better showcase popular and award-winning literature, and provide better access to local history collections while building upon the library’s STEAM offerings, such as its Makerspace, which currently provides access to 3D printing, a sound recording studio, iMacs, laptops, and computer coding instruction. (STEAM is an acronym for science, technology, engineering, art and math).

The search process that yielded Johnson Favaro as the new architect was led by Library Director Tonya Kennon and included several staff members as well as representatives from the Board of Library Trustees and the community. Johnson Favaro is led by Steve Johnson and Jim Favaro, both graduates of Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design. The firm has successfully completed

over \$300 million worth of construction projects and scores of plans and studies for local governments, institutions of higher education and communities in Southern California.

Johnson Favaro specializes in planning and design, including cost planning and conceptual design, building design, document production, construction administration and post occupancy services. Johnson Favaro's building projects range in size from \$1 million to \$100 million and include several award-winning designs, such as the Manhattan Beach Public Library, West Hollywood Public Library and Pasadena Museum of California Art.

"Johnson Favaro is an excellent choice to advance the Main Library into the 21st century," Kennon said. "We are eager to work with them to take the community's input and create a space that really captures what Riverside wants and needs in a new Main Library."

The team will contract with renowned library consultant Linda Demmers on the project. Demmers brings a professional background as a librarian, has extensive experience in library facility planning and has served as the owners' representative on a wide variety of new construction and renovation projects.

Demmers specializes in the planning process, program documentation, broad-based community and user involvement, and long-term owner client relationships. Demmers is Project Manager for Libris DESIGN, a library facility planning information system and downloadable database that was developed for California public library planners.

"The new Main Library will launch a new era of discovery for Riversiders, young and old," Mayor Pro Tem Mike Gardner said. "I encourage the community to attend these public meetings and provide its input on what should be included in a new Main Library."