



Metropolitan Group
the power of voice

TIPS FOR CREATING A NEW LIBRARY
Early Planning for Capital Projects

Before your library launches a bond initiative or capital campaign, it is important to understand how to effectively motivate your diverse constituencies to support the project. We at Metropolitan Group have more than 16 years of experience working with libraries and library advocacy groups, harnessing the power of communication and resource development to educate stakeholders and the general public and to engage them in supporting public and private funding initiatives. Here are some tips from what we've learned.

Articulate the Need

- As you plan your campaign, be aware that community support for a new library is based on the true need for enhanced library services in your community.
- Identify service gaps and needs to ensure adequate technology; a broad spectrum of collections (in appropriate languages); diverse programming; ADA accessibility; specific space for children; meeting rooms; branch library upgrades or expansions; a bookmobile.
- Communicate how an enhanced library would benefit your community.

Discover the Political Will

- Determine who will lead the charge—staff, volunteers, civic and political leaders, and key partners.
- Identify who needs to lend support to get the project on the public's "radar."
- Focus on how the project relates to other community needs (literacy levels, after-school programs, downtown revitalization initiatives, etc.).

Define the Project Scope

- If helpful, compare your current library with ALA benchmarks based on community population.
- Address specific community challenges such as Internet penetration; the digital divide; number of children on free or reduced lunches; and the need for library services at other community institutions (public schools, colleges, etc.)
- Define the initial scope and costs with a potential architect and/or contractor.

Define the Funding Mix

- Identify potential sources of public funds: bonds or levies; directed appropriations; partner funds (community college, university, etc.); lottery funds; tax credits or economic development grants.
- Identify potential sources of private funds and opportunities unique to your community: foundations (local, regional and national, as well as community and corporate); corporations (cash and in-kind contributions); individuals (current and potential donors, and estate gifts).

Strategic Communication

Resource Development

Intercultural and
Cross-Cultural Communication

Organizational Development

Chicago

35 East Wacker Drive Suite 1750
Chicago Illinois 60601-2208
Phone 312 628 1447 Fax 312 628 1449

Portland

519 SW Third Avenue Suite 700
Portland Oregon 97204-2519
Phone 503 223 3299 Fax 503 223 3474

Washington DC

1800 K Street NW Suite 200
Washington DC 20006-2247
Phone 202 380 3123 Fax 202 380 3127

Metropolitan Group crafts strategic and creative services that empower social purpose organizations to build a just and sustainable world.

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Create Fertile Ground

- Use established library communication (youth programs, literacy, adult education, etc.) to highlight campaign support messages.
- Use education-oriented communications, such as signs and displays in buildings and newsletter articles to highlight the library's gaps and needs.
- Engage business and media partners in general library support programs to establish relationships.
- Motivate the library user base with a soft campaign to build volunteer messenger cooperation.

Plan Your Campaign for Public Funds

- Establish the mechanism (voter-approved bond, taxing authority budget allocation, etc.) and timing.
- Raise funds to support the campaign for public funds. Form a PAC or partner with an existing 501(C4).
- Engage the media and seek early editorial support.
- Energize the library user base through fundraising and grassroots campaigning.
- Be prepared to go to the ballot box more than once—learn and adapt if you don't win.
- Conduct private fundraising with library family/supporters (the inner circle) to create momentum while working on the public campaign.

Plan Your Private Fundraising Campaign

- Define the case for support, based on community need, by looking at the margin of excellence, the library's shopping list and gift recognition.
- Establish campaign infrastructure by creating foundation, database and governance, and by recruiting campaign leadership.
- Identify and qualify donors.
- Work pathways to donors.
- Conduct cultivation at regular intervals.
- Seek leadership gifts with challenges for major gifts and public appeal.
- Integrate marketing and fundraising to build support for the public phase.

Services include:

Fundraising Campaigns – Capital, Endowment and Annual support
Summer Reading Programs
Public Awareness and Public Education Campaigns
Public Affairs Strategies
Media Campaigns
Brand Communication Plans
Strategic Plans

Metropolitan Group provides a full range of services for libraries, including fundraising, marketing and branding, public relations, public affairs, strategic planning, outreach to new and diverse audiences, online communication and graphic design.