



Building Healthy Minds and Bodies, Together Library/Y Capital Campaign for Tri-City Jewish Center project

The community phase of our Capital Campaign for this exciting joint project involving the former Tri-City Jewish Center has now launched. As of the June 29 Community Campaign kickoff, nearly 90 percent of funds have been raised by a volunteer cabinet and campaign tri-chairs working with the Rock Island Public Library Foundation and Two Rivers YMCA personnel.

The Two Rivers YMCA and the Rock Island Public Library will share the facility through an occupancy agreement. The YMCA will own the building, with the library occupying about 35 percent of the facility. The collaboration provides facility efficiency for both as the shared lobby, parking, outdoor space, and mechanical areas will efficiently share costs.

Building a Stronger Community

The Two Rivers YMCA and Rock Island Public Library are working to build healthy minds and bodies together, under one roof. By sharing the facility at 2715 30th Street, Rock Island, our two organizations will work to build a stronger community for all.

The programs, services, and initiatives offered at the new facility will enable kids to realize their potential, prepare teens for college and trade careers, provide safe and affordable recreation, help seniors stay healthy and active, and offer ways for families to have fun and grow together.

Community leader forums identified intergenerational programming and literacy as essential to meeting the strategic needs of Rock Island. Mixing the library's public sector and the YMCA's non-profit services in one location offers new service and program partnerships that work to the benefit of Rock Island and surrounding areas. An inclusive facility to offer YMCA and Library community services such as character development, mentoring, literacy, nutrition education, multicultural/multilingual programs, and youth development supports Rock Island graduation rates, crime prevention, and economic stability.

The YMCA/Library collaboration is essential for continuing public education and self-betterment. Sharing resources allows the Library to provide the contemporary education, lifelong learning, and community connection services for a vibrant City.

Gains for Library Users:

Library patrons gain expanded and highly-accessible services and resources in a centrally-located neighborhood. With several nearby schools, the mid-town branch's new areas for teens and school-age youth will positively engage Rock Island students. This project fulfills several services requested by patrons, including:

- Providing a modest collection for convenient borrowing
- Room for small meetings and study groups
- Upgraded technology for digital accessibility
- Community Room for large programs and all ages events
- Extended parking and easy access
- Walkability in a neighborhood setting, and
- Outdoor access for programs and reading

Other than cosmetic upgrades and ongoing maintenance, the Rock Island Downtown and Southwest Libraries remain unchanged and in place. With more than 175,000 items in the library collection, these spaces are vital to library operations. With the YMCA/Library site and the library's existing locations, all residents will be able to access in-person library services within a three-mile radius of their home.

Sharing the building with the YMCA keeps the library's annual operations cost as sustainable as possible. The library gains a new, up-to-date facility for about the same annual cost as the former library, with additional space for books and reading, community room, meeting and study rooms, an outdoor area for gathering and programming, and a teen area. Library operations are funded by the Library's City budget and Library Tax Levy. The Library budget changes yearly based on need and is determined by the Library Board of Trustees with City Council approval.

Gains for Greater Health and Well Being

The new facility allows the YMCA to more fully address the important issue of food insecurity of Rock Island youth. The additional kitchen at the Tri-City Jewish Center will allow the YMCA to enhance its success in helping youth and families establish healthier nutritional habits and lifestyles. This commercial kitchen will centralize the current network of kitchens at the Moline YMCA's Spirit, Mind and Body Center, Moline Boys and Girls Club and Martin Luther King Jr. Center.

Through Nourish, the YMCA's community-based nutrition program, Nourish staff prepare and serve over 1,500 free meals/snacks per day at nearly 35 youth before/after school program sites across Rock Island County. The demand continues to increase and lack of capacity has forced Nourish to turn down additional program requests. The new location at the Tri-City Jewish Center would allow the YMCA to increase capacity with a larger, fully updated commercial kitchen while utilizing the three current kitchens for community-based nutrition education programs.

Income-based membership is an important part of the YMCA mission and social responsibility focus. Rock Island needs a safe, secure location where people of all ages and backgrounds can grow in spirit, mind, and body. When kids are out of school, the joint YMCA-Library facility and its amenities will offer a place for kids to remain physically active, socially engaged and academically supported. Youth and adults will have the opportunity to interact and learn from one another in a supportive and safe location.

This joint facility will provide programs that serve residents of every background, race, gender, age, and income. This geographically-central location is walkable from six schools and well-served by public transportation, providing an accessible and welcoming hub for all.

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