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MAYOR BRONIN, HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNOUNCE PLANS TO BUILD NEW BARBOUR STREET LIBRARY

(Hartford, CT) – Today, Mayor Bronin, Hartford Public Library HPL President and CEO Bridget E. Quinn, and city and community leaders announced that the Hartford Public Library (HPL) will break ground on a new Barbour Library Branch in the Spring of 2024.

The project's estimated construction cost of \$17.1 million has been funded utilizing a combination of sources, including City of Hartford general funds, funding made available to the City through the American Rescue Plan Act, funds made available from corporate contributions by The Hartford, Travelers, and Aetna, and a \$2 million award from the Connecticut State Library's Public Library Construction Grant program. Last night, the City Council voted to approve the Mayor's request for a final allocation of \$3.5 million to close the remaining funding gap and ensure that all funds are in place.

"Thank you to Mayor Luke Bronin, to the City of Hartford, and to the Connecticut State Library for making it possible for HPL to build a new state of the art Barbour Library. The Library will be a beacon of learning, engagement, culture and celebration for the community and allow HPL to build upon and expand services. Feedback from the community about how the library should look, feel and operate was the basis of the design. This is going to be a transformational building, not just for our community but our entire library system and for the City. We are looking forward to having the new Barbour Library open to serve our community as soon as possible." said HPL President and CEO Bridget E. Quinn.

"The Barbour Library has been one of our top priorities, and we've worked hard to put the final funding in place so that construction can move forward as soon as the weather gets warm," said Mayor Bronin. "The Barbour Library will be a state of the art facility that will welcome and inspire generations of kids and families here in the Northeast neighborhood. This project is also a really important piece of the broader work to revitalize Barbour Street, including the planned renovation of Wish School, the construction of new quality affordable housing on the corners of Westland and Barbour, and hopefully the redevelopment of the Clark School property in the years ahead. We're blessed to have one of the best library systems in the country, and I'm proud that the Northeast neighborhood will now have a beautiful, standalone branch to call its own. I'm grateful to everyone who has helped to make this project possible, and I'm especially grateful to our community and to neighborhood leaders like Steve Harris, who have led the planning for this project from the start."

The current Barbour Library, 1,850 sq. ft. located in a leased store front in Unity Plaza, is not large enough to provide the services, technology and programming to meet the needs of the community. The new library will be 15,000 sq. ft and will include a children's room, teen lounge, computer area, technology lab, and an area for programming facilitated by Makerspace. It will be built on the currently vacant city-owned lot at 234 Barbour Street, the site of the former Snyder's supermarket, which had sat vacant and blighted for decades before it was acquired and remediated by the City of Hartford.



Resident and stakeholder focus groups were engaged to ensure the neighborhood's needs were reflected in the plans. Based on community input, the new Library will include a Community Room for meetings, cultural events, and programming. A dedicated food pantry will enable expansion of the twice-monthly food distribution service currently offered in partnership with Connecticut Foodshare. An enclosed courtyard for outdoor programming will foster additional collaboration with KNOX and the Mount Moriah Community Garden located adjacent to the new Library site.

The new Library will feature the NextGen Adult Learning Center, a space for expanded workforce and career development classes and training, and enhanced educational and skill-based training opportunities offered by HPL and community partners. The new Barbour Library will ensure that the Library's Boundless partnership with the Fred D. Wish Museum School continues to be strong.

Construction is expected to start in the Spring of 2024 with a completion timeline of 12-18 months.

About Hartford Public Library

With roots dating to 1774, Hartford Public Library remains at the forefront of redefining the urban library experience in the 21st century. With seven locations throughout the city, the library provides education, intellectual enrichment and cultural development for thousands of children, youth and adults every year. Hartford Public Library has also gained local and national recognition for its wide range of new initiatives and partnerships designed to meet the needs of a diverse and dynamic city and region, including immigration services, employment assistance and youth leadership training. www.hplct.org.

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