FLATHEAD COUNTY Library
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Completed Campaign Readiness Study Finds Strong Community Support for a New Library

Study finds philanthropic potential and community enthusiasm, while identifying important steps needed before launching a capital campaign.

KALISPELL, MT — Flathead County Library - Kalispell has completed a Campaign Readiness Study to evaluate community support and philanthropic potential for a proposed new library and $13 million capital campaign.

Conducted by BrandRaise, the study gathered input from more than 300 community members through 61 individual interviews, six focus groups, and a public survey with 223 respondents.

The findings point to strong community support for a new library. Among survey respondents, 80% said a new and expanded library in Kalispell is important. Fifty-five percent considered the proposed $13 million fundraising goal reasonable, while another 41% said it may be reasonable. Nearly half of interview participants asked about personal giving said they would contribute, with another 45% saying they might.

Serving the community since 1892, the Kalispell library is the central hub library for a county of more than 115,000 residents. Today, approximately 800 people visit the Kalispell location each day, and registered cardholders have grown by 27% since 2022.

While the study found meaningful support, it also identified several steps needed before a campaign can move forward. These include securing a site, confirming project costs and an operating plan, building alignment among Library Trustees, Foundation Board and county leadership, and developing relationships with prospective major donors.

The study recommends delaying the campaign launch and reassessing readiness in six months. This will allow the Library, Foundation, and community leaders to address key priorities, establish a clear project plan, and identify the donor commitments needed to set a defensible campaign goal.

As the study's executive summary concludes, "The community has shown it believes in the library. The work ahead is to turn that belief into a clear plan, unified leadership, and committed donors."

The Library team, Board, and Foundation will now consider the study's recommendations and determine next steps. For the complete study, please visit flatheadcountylibrary.org/about-us/capital-campaign/.

Flathead County Library provides educational and recreational materials, programs, and resources to promote literacy, inspire lifelong learning, and enrich the community. For more information, visit flatheadcountylibrary.org.

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