

SPOTLIGHT ON THE LIBRARY CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Feasibility study methodology and result

The Friends of the Appleton Public Library (Friends) contracted with K. Rose, LLC to conduct a feasibility study for the Appleton Public Library. This planning study was conducted by Karen Rose and Sharon Griggins to assess Appleton's readiness and capacity to support a \$12 million capital campaign to renovate and expand the Appleton Public Library.

To implement the study, Karen Rose and Sharon Griggins conducted 30 confidential interviews during the months of December 2021 and January 2022. Study participants were selected collaboratively by the Friends Pre-campaign Steering Committee and are individuals (or households) as well as representatives of organizations identified as either potential major donors for a library capital campaign or who held valuable insights on the community's philanthropic culture and history.

The personal interview format was designed to elicit advice, impressions, opinions, and information relating to Friends, Appleton Public Library, and this specific project. The questions asked of interview participants sought to capture the urgency and desirability of the proposed project, the viability of a major capital campaign, the availability of leaders and volunteers who will be needed in a campaign, and the availability of gifts that will be necessary for the campaign to be successful.

The results of this study indicated favorable views of Appleton Public Library (APL) and Friends, a compelling case for support, favorable views of the design and an understanding that there was a need to invest in the library to serve our community now and in the future.

The consultants recommended that Friends should embark on a \$12 million capital campaign. The identification and confirmation of a significant lead gift of \$3 million provides a pivotal opportunity to leverage additional major gifts. In addition to this lead gift, the feasibility study identified the potential to engage another \$6.5 million from individual and institutional donors. Thus, the study indicates that at least \$9.5 million, or 80% of the goal, is available to the library, which is a strong indicator that a \$12 million capital campaign will be successful. A 12–18 month campaign was recommended.

Capital campaign preparations

K. Rose Consulting has been hired to work with Friends on the campaign. A2Z Design has been selected to prepare the campaign materials. A capital campaign case statement and brand will be completed by the end of May.

A Capital Campaign Committee has been assembled and will start their work in June and will begin meeting with donors in early July. This will officially start the silent phase of the campaign. This is a period where the committee will focus on soliciting lead gifts with the goal

of having 80% of the total goal committed before moving to the public phase of the campaign in early 2023.

Gifts to the campaign will be made in accordance with the library's Naming Rights Policy, which was approved in April. A donor agreement is being developed.

Friends has approached a local lender to negotiate a bridge loan which will provide financing to facilitate multi-year gifts, a common approach in capital campaigns.

History of the Friends of Appleton Public Library

With the understanding that when the city decided to move forward with a library building project that private funding could help enhance the core library services, Friends have been preparing for a capital campaign for more than a decade.

The Friends organization is the result of the merger of two organizations, the Friends of Appleton Library, and the Appleton Library Foundation. One of the goals of this merger was to strengthen the goals of both organizations and be better positioned to support library programs and services, including a building project. Friends is an independent 501c3 with an Executive Director and has provided \$1.7 million in grants to the library since 2000.

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