



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

News Release

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New Wheaton Library-Recreation Center Complex on Schedule for Opening in Late Summer 2019 *First Combined Project of Its Kind in Montgomery County Will Be Major Part of Wheaton Revitalization*

Construction of the future Wheaton Library and Community Recreation Center, which will be the first combined complex of its kind in Montgomery County, is nearing completion and remains on schedule to open in late summer 2019. The combined facilities, which will include a Friends of the Library used book store, will be key elements in the revitalization of Wheaton.

The \$70.9 million project and 92,000-square foot building is located on Georgia Avenue between and Arcola Avenue and the realigned Hermitage Avenue—just across from the Wheaton Volunteer Fire and Rescue station. The rescue squad's ballroom is serving as the interim public library during construction. The library and recreation center, which is being constructed by the County's Department of General Services (DGS), will be about a half-mile from the Wheaton Metro Station.

The library and recreation center will be just north of a new 14-story County Office Building that will open in Spring 2020. That building, whose construction is being overseen by the Department of Transportation, will be the new home of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, which is currently located in Downtown Silver Spring. The building also will be home to several County departments including Permitting Services, Environmental Protection, Health and Human Services, Recreation and Community Use of Public Facilities. In addition, relocating to the new building will be the Wheaton Urban District and the Mid-County Regional Services offices.

The library and recreation center complex, which will have free County wi-fi throughout, will be certified LEED Silver. It will have parking for approximately 230 vehicles—about 170 in a new parking garage and about 60 surface spaces. In addition to parking, the library and recreation center will share a lobby area, meeting spaces, classrooms and rest rooms. To facilitate the project, the County realigned Hermitage Avenue.

This combined facility will provide a library and community recreation center equivalent to facilities with similar needs throughout the County. In addition to the cost savings associated with efficient design, the use of shared spaces reduced the overall building size and allowed for use of the remaining area as open space abutting an existing park.

“We have committed to not just rebuilding Wheaton, but to creating a revitalized Wheaton for our current residents and for residents in generations to come,” said County Executive Marc Elrich, who was a County Councilmember when the project was approved and attended nearby Einstein High School. “As someone who

used to go to the old Wheaton Youth Center and the Wheaton Library, I am excited to think about how this new complex will be a vital part of Wheaton's future.”

The recreation center will include a gymnasium and a second-floor walking track that circles the gym space. It will be the first indoor walking track in any County recreation facility. There will a pottery studio in the building, a fitness room and open park space immediately adjacent that will accommodate youth activities. It will be a multi-purpose recreational facility that offers a variety of programs and activities for people of all ages, ranging from sports, fitness, dance, music and art.

When the concept for the project was approached in 2013, the Wheaton Library was one of the busiest libraries in Montgomery County with more than 490,000 items circulated and more than 381,000 visits by the public in Fiscal Year 2013. The new library will have computers for public use. The nearby used book store will be operated by Friends of the Library.

QUOTE COUNCILMEMBER NAVARRO

The building is scheduled for construction completion in Spring 2019, after which time is required for the departments of Libraries and Recreation to move in equipment, stack shelves and otherwise ready the facility. Opening to the public is expected in late summer.

For more details and updates on the construction of the library and recreation center complex, go to the Department of General Services website at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DGS-BDC/MMC/361202.html>.

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