Dear Dublin Residents,

Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML) is committed to delivering a new, world-class library to you. Dublin is one of 10 new branch library projects that comprise our current capital program, and we believe the time is now to move the Dublin Branch project forward.

With an $18.6 million investment by CML for the new Dublin Branch, and a similar level of investment by the City of Dublin for the new shared parking garage, various roadways and utility work, this project represents a substantial cooperative investment of public funds.

This project also has unusual complexity. It involves careful coordination among three public entities (City of Dublin, Columbus Metropolitan Library and Dublin City School District), and is being designed and implemented within the context of many dynamic changes and new developments in Dublin. Consequently, much of the extended planning history, including past decisions and context, may not be fully understood. So we are taking this opportunity to provide a comprehensive overview of the project.

First a word about design. We believe the design represents an extraordinarily thoughtful and well-planned addition of a great civic space within Dublin’s evolving downtown. As has been noted by others (including Dublin’s planning staff and consultants), there are many successful examples around the world of civic buildings with contemporary designs built as focal points adjacent to or within the historic areas of great cities. We acknowledge both passionate supporters and detractors of the proposed design; we have tried to respectfully respond to suggestions aired throughout the 8 years this project has been developed.

Since formally presenting the design concept to Dublin City Council earlier this year, we have worked to balance feedback on the design with moving forward on a project that we believe successfully accomplishes both ours and the City’s goals. Thus we are open to the following plan refinements, subject to securing outside funding:

• Willingness to change the base material of the building from brick to stone (as long as the selected stone remains consistent with the larger library design concept)
• Agreeing to accept the City’s consideration to fund sidewalk and landscape materials that define the transition from historic to new
• Through a collaborative process, creating a “signature transition element” on or near our library site that represents a meaningful transition from historic to contemporary

Given our need and desire to keep the library project moving forward, we have asked that Dublin City Council review and take action on the Basic Plan for both the library and the city’s shared parking garage at its April 24, 2017 meeting. With each delay the library faces significant escalation costs and loses prime construction days. If we cannot move forward, while our commitment to Dublin remains, we may need to defer this project until our next building cycle and apply these resources to other pressing capital needs within the CML system.

We are proud of our design and believe that this library will truly exemplify the city’s motto “Where yesterday meets tomorrow,” and will be one that serves as a crown jewel for many years.

We welcome your additional questions and/or support, which you can provide through this email: newdublinbranch@columbuslibrary.org

Dublin Branch

The new Dublin Branch will have:

• Approximately 41,000 square feet of space (it currently has 20,147)
• More parking spaces
• A larger Homework Help Center
• A dedicated Ready for Kindergarten area
• A robust collection
• 3 meeting rooms
• 7 study rooms
• More community gathering space
• A café
We hope this summary makes clear that this important project has not been rushed, but has been an involved and deliberative partnership over many years. We believe, like the City's independent design review consultant Design Group and its in-house planning review team (ART), that: “the proposed project is appropriately designed for its current location, and that this great civic space will serve the residents of our community extremely well for many decades to come.”

2009

• A library presentation was made during a City Council retreat held at OCLC where Council members expressed their concern with the inadequacy of the current Dublin Branch and expressed doubt in CML’s ability to deliver a dynamic, contemporary and future-oriented library to match the growth and vision for the city of Dublin.

2011

• Kick off visioning meeting at OSU’s Thompson Library to serve as inspiration and to gather ideas to incorporate into the new library. CML, City of Dublin and OCLC representatives participated. OCLC is a locally based, worldwide library cooperative.

2013

• Initial Architect selection for the Dublin Branch made by CML with input and consent of Dublin Administration.

2014

• The initial design process kicked off in January, followed by a working session with City Council in April. At request of City Council, CML was asked to consider multiple alternate sites, which we did. Dublin City School District (DCSD) currently holds a “restriction of record” on the library land that directs any proceeds for the land value to the schools, based on an arrangement made in 1979 when the current library was built. Should CML vacate the property, the land reverts to Dublin City Schools and CML loses $2-3 million in land value, thereby raising the cost of alternate sites by the incremental cost of the land.

• CML began working with Dublin Administration to craft a Development Agreement and Parking Easement for the site, aimed at defining the responsibilities of the parties in this complex development partnership.

• CML engaged the community with a public meeting at the current Dublin Branch to solicit design input. We also surveyed Dublin customers.

• At the request of Dublin Administration, CML met with Crawford Hoying, the City’s consultant planning team, and City staff to engage in a collaborative planning process to coordinate all projects proposed for the Bridge Street District.

• CML and Dublin Administration (and DCSD) crafted a plan to develop the current library site, using separate architectural firms but the same general contracting services of Turner Construction.

• Dublin Administration asked the library to explore (at the City’s cost) possibilities of integrating space for Dublin Arts Council and Dublin Convention and Visitors Bureau as part of the new library building. The ideas were later abandoned.

2015

• The library, City of Dublin and DCSD had numerous discussions to determine a plan for the required land transfers needed to accommodate new roadways, shared parking and the new library. Design of the library was put on hold while this lengthy process took place.

• Dublin Administration requested that City consultants Jonathan Barnes Architects and MKSK Studios provide input to the library to ensure consistency with the ongoing City planning.

2016

• Library staff and Dublin Administration negotiated terms of a Development Agreement, which includes the Parking Easement for the library, adding substantial additional parking to serve downtown Dublin.

• The library worked with Moody Nolan, garage architect, to coordinate garage and street plans with the library design.

• Council members approved an agreement with the DCSD to waive compensation for the CML land needed by the City in exchange for connecting to the DubLink fiber optic network.
Budget Considerations:
The library’s budget for this building is $18.6 million. To date, delays and construction inflation have increased our estimates by $2 million. With construction cost escalation estimated at $80-100,000 per month, additional delays for this project only negatively affect CML’s ability to produce the library envisioned for the Dublin community.

When our Basic Plan is reviewed by City Council in April, even this one-month delay (from the tabling on March 20) puts us at risk of missing valuable 2017 construction days, and may postpone start of construction until Spring 2018. Looking at 12 months of escalation costs means $1 million in additional costs that CML cannot absorb.

It is important to note that while the current building design has received cost estimates, the dynamic construction marketplace in central Ohio makes it impossible to know actual costs until design bidding is completed.

Library Land Conveyances:
Currently, CML has perpetual rights to 3.5 acres of land. Under the terms of our Development Agreement with the City of Dublin, we will be transferring over 2.3 acres of our 3.5 acres of land to the City for the purposes enumerated below – leaving CML with 1.15 acres of land for its library building and public plaza.

As part of the Development Agreement the City of Dublin has asked CML to transfer portions of its site for new roadways, a new green space and a 500+ space parking garage – 200 of the spots will be reserved for library use. The new and improved roadways (Rock Cress Blvd., Franklin Street and North Street) require .78 acres of CML land, while the new city owned parking garage requires an additional 1.25 acres from our site. Additionally .29 acres will be transferred to the City to provide a larger green space buffer adjacent to the “Grounds of Remembrance” veteran’s memorial.
Your Dublin Branch

With open vistas, generous seating, a stellar collection and a proud design, this new Dublin Branch matches the dynamic future vision of the city of Dublin. It includes a signature plaza where families can gather for unique civic events.

Support the Dublin Branch

CML will launch a fundraising effort in Dublin as we have for our other projects. Working with the City, we will provide naming opportunities for individuals and businesses who believe in the power and transformational abilities of our library. Funds will help complete the project and provide the enhanced civic plaza depicted in our designs. For more information or to make a gift, please contact CML’s Development Team at 614-849-1051.

Columbus Metropolitan Library Guiding Principles

- Transparency: Broad vistas to view inside
- Flexibility: Open floor plans for future changes
- Iconic Design: Innovative and forward-thinking
- Sustainability: Practices like storm water management, highly efficient energy systems
- Technology: Creative applications for services
- Innovative Programming: Collaborations with others
- Customer Experience: World-class service
- Young Minds: Our top priority; buildings reflect commitment
- Showcase Our Collection: No longer hidden in shelves

Let us know what you think.

Please share your comments and questions using this email: newdublinbranch@columbuslibrary.org