

Community Design Advocate (CDA) Program

Project overview

Multnomah County Library is expanding Holgate and Midland libraries to provide additional space and a great experience for all. Holgate Library will be an entirely new building at approximately 21,000 square feet and Midland Library will update and expand by about 6,000 square feet. Both buildings are scheduled to be done around spring of 2024.

Project goals

The community's voice is an important part of the design of both buildings. **The Community Design Advocate program will develop this project's connection to and support for the various communities the libraries serve.** The design team for Holgate and Midland libraries is committed to the principles of [Design Justice](#). This means we use design as a way to challenge systems of power that harm communities, whether the harm is intentional or not.

We do this so that the buildings we create truly enrich the lives of the people who are impacted by our work. In order to design *with* communities, we rely on community members themselves as experts. We want to make sure our designs are reflections of the needs, histories and cultures of the communities the building serves.

The design advocates help to understand the relationship between the residents, the building and its neighborhood. **Because the design advocates are part of the project team, they will receive a stipend for their efforts.** We will ask them to engage with community members, build on relationships and take notes of their discussions and meetings.

Design advocates will be asked to meet regularly with the design team to share what they have heard and work through the feedback. It's important that design advocates have honest and open conversations with community members and with the design team. Design advocates are free to give their unfiltered feedback based on the conversations during the project without fear.

Project structure

The engagement portion of the project will allow design advocates to reach out to their community about the project, both informally and with scheduled meetings. Informal conversations are up to each design advocate, and each design advocate will invite community members to scheduled meetings with the project team. **We expect design advocates to spend 4-6 hours a week collaborating with us, and they will be paid a stipend for their efforts.**

There will be two series of meetings:

1. **Regular group meetings** with all Community Design Advocates and project team
2. **Regular listening sessions** with project team and community members

The milestones for the community design advocates program are as follows:

- **Late October 2021:** Bring design advocates on board
- **November 2021 - Late January 2022:** (4-6 hours/week)
 - Onboarding + training for design advocates, including Design Justice principles
 - Discussions about decision-making processes to be sure we are focusing on community voice
 - Design advocates lead activities with stakeholder communities, supported by design & engagement team
 - Community voice is included in library design options with focus on Design Justice
 - Community needs and opportunities shared by design advocates will be included in Design Justice document, highlighting community voices in design decisions
- **Late January - Early March 2022:** (4-6 hours/week)
 - Design advocates help define character and components of library spaces
 - Explore suggestions around building materials, art and representation, color palettes, and other details
 - Together with design team and library staff, discuss how design advocates would like to stay connected to this project and each other moving forward

Resources & support

In this program, we often create materials to support our efforts, such as paper surveys, posters, newspapers, flyers, texting surveys etc. We will develop the materials with the design advocates.

Community design advocates program general schedule

We have attached a graphic schedule of the community design advocates process below, going through the program phases in addition to noting some of the important time frames for our work together.

Midland & Holgate libraries community design advocates program timeline



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