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## AGING INSTITUTION

# Fundraising campaigns for Larkspur Library gain steam



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Fundraising campaigns have been launched to rebuild the aging Larkspur Library.

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Supporters of the Larkspur Library have teamed up to launch a pair of aggressive fundraising campaigns to rebuild the aging city institution.

Joe Jennings, president of the Commons Foundation, a non-profit created to be the fundraising arm for the city project, announced a \$1 million challenge this month. Residents Lori Lerner and Terry Berkemeier have pledged to match donations of \$50,000 or more through December, Jennings said.

Additionally, the Larkspur Library Foundation is offering a

\$100,000 matching grant for cash donations to the Commons Foundation received by Feb. 28, Jennings said.

The two efforts will put the city project in a good position to receive a matching state grant for library projects, he said.

"If the state does a 50-50 match, \$200,000 raised would now be worth \$400,000," he said. "This is one of those unique times in fundraising where you can increase the value of your gift four times by making it now before the city puts in the application."

The City Council helped form the Commons Foundation for the project fundraising.

City Manager Dan Schwarz

said the state has not yet issued a guidelines or set a deadline for the application. The deadline is expected to be in February.

"Watching the council's vision come to fruition is very exciting for staff," Schwarz said. "This current push feels like we finally have the momentum to make this project happen."

The council is considering a move to the vacant Rose Lane parcel because its 108-year-old City Hall at 400 Magnolia Ave., which houses the library, is in need of a \$10 million to \$12 million renovation.

Schwarz said the state library infrastructure fund has \$439 mil-

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lion to distribute in matching grants for library projects.

While key project details remain unresolved, the matching grant has been identified as an opportunity to leverage dollars to support the project, rather than relying solely on city funds.

The project will certainly include a new library, but it's unclear whether city offices will be part of the fi-

nal plan.

Preliminary estimates for a new 5,000-square-foot library come to about \$5 million. A new City Hall building equal in size would cost the same, bringing the total estimate to about \$10 million.

The Lerner-Berkemeier campaigns has raised \$200,000 in new pledges and \$200,000 in matching funds to date. The couple have lived in Larkspur since 1994. Lerner was a volunteer and then a part-time children's librarian for several years.

"I think if you could give back anything to the community, a library is just about the apex," Lerner said.

Berkemeier said there is a sense of urgency with the state grant deadline approaching.

"A thing like a library is a core for the community," he said. "Supporting things locally, I think is important."

Larry Lanctot, president of the Larkspur Library Foundation, said the foundation has supported the library for 45 years.

"The Larkspur Library

Foundation board of directors is excited to assist the Commons Foundation and the city of Larkspur achieve their funding goal for the library at Rose Lane," he said.

The matching funds in this campaign amount to \$126,000.

The Commons Foundation has raised \$2.5 million in cash and pledges as of Dec. 31. The goal is to raise \$5 million by the end of this year.

More information about the fundraising campaigns is at [thecommonsatlarkspur.org](http://thecommonsatlarkspur.org).