



FFP GRANT TALKING PONTS

Five fast facts about the Alma Public Library:

1. Last year, we circulated a total of 26,472 items - a 28.7% increase from the year before.
2. A total of 1,693 people attended Alma Library programs in 2023, a 428% increase from the year before
3. In 2022, program attendance increased by 3,325%
4. 609 of Alma's 711 residents are registered library card holders (over 85%)
5. The library is not just for readers: there were nearly 20,000 broadband internet usage sessions in 2022, and we're the only place in town where the public can print documents, make self-serve copies, and send faxes. It's also a neutral meeting space for individuals and groups.

Five fast facts about the Flex Facilities Projects (FFP) grant:

1. It's a state allocation of remaining Covid funds (via the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021)
2. It's on a quick timeline. It was announced in December, details were released in May; applications are due July 11, and awards are expected to be announced in October. Projects must be completed by September 2026.
3. Only certain types of projects are eligible; the grant can't be used for city offices or schools.
4. Libraries are favored; the first \$20M will go to the highest scoring libraries.
5. It will be signed by the mayor and officially submitted through the city of Alma.

The library's demonstrated need:

1. Our collection has outgrown the space; it does not all fit in accessible areas.
2. Library usage has outgrown the space; we cannot accommodate demand.
3. The building lacks equitable access: there is no dedicated parking lot, no accessibility-designated parking spaces, and only one ADA compliant exit, which also does not meet FEMA standards.
4. The current space has inadequate storage, and no private rooms, developmentally differentiated spaces, or designated programming or community space, limiting the types of resources and services we are able to provide.
5. The foundations of the current library building are failing.

Applicability to non-library users and library users alike:

1. The community lacks a senior center or community center. The proposed grant would include a multipurpose community room where community partners will offer programming for seniors, children, and families. It will also be reservable by people in the community and will have a separate, outdoor entrance with a reprogrammable entry code for use outside of library hours.
2. The community lacks indoor play places for youngsters, which the proposed facility would provide.
3. The community has few recreational opportunities for youth. The proposed project would help.
4. The facility would draw more people to the area, who would likely visit local businesses.
5. Private rooms would provide space for virtual meetings or job interviews, virtual employment meetings, supervised visits, test proctoring, telehealth appointments, and more.

Location choice and timing

1. To be competitive for the grant, we needed to demonstrate that we are as able to complete this project within the specified budget and time frame as those with shovel ready plans.
2. To do this, it was necessary to first select a site so architects could prepare preliminary designs with the cost estimates and construction timelines required for the grant.
3. A single level facility is preferred for line-of-sight safety, functionality, and lower maintenance costs. Multi-story buildings require costly elevators and two separate staircases, which alone would take up most of the footprint of other locations considered.
4. The library Board and several professional architects evaluated other available sites put forth by the city and others. Ultimately, they could not meet current code requirements for the number of parking spaces per square foot.
5. Alma Area Schools generously offered to donate a plot of land that meets all the needs.
6. The inspiring location was key in encouraging four separate architectural firms to provide extensive proposal packages at no charge, a value of approximately \$5-10K a piece.

Answers to some FAQs

1. Preliminary community input and communication efforts include meetings with elected leaders, surveys, newspaper articles, talking points/fact-sheet distribution, and 1-1 conversations.
2. As the grant progresses, more input from community and city leadership will be consulted.
3. On May 9, the Alma City Council found this prospect to be in the city's best interests and voted to fully support the pursuit of this grant for this facility at the selected location.
4. Strategies for the maintenance of this building are being developed and include creative solutions, possible partnerships, and energy-saving, sustainable elements.
5. Counties reimburse per item that non-Alma residents check out from the library.
6. More information about the grant can be found at:
<https://energyandhousing.wi.gov/Pages/AgencyResources/FlexibleFacilities.aspx>