

Menu ▾

[? \(https://www.submittable.com/help/submitter\)](https://www.submittable.com/help/submitter)

KH ▾

Received

## Mendocino County Library

Submitted to **California State Library** (<http://www.library.ca.gov/>) - **Maximizing Learning Spaces - Design Opportunity** (<https://californiastatelibrary.submittable.com/submit/151099/maximizing-learning-spaces-design-opportunity>) on 12/03/2019 (2 days ago)

[Download \(/api/submissions/14603376/pdf\)](/api/submissions/14603376/pdf) | [Edit](#) | [Withdraw](#)

y) ACTIVITY

MESSAGES

CONTENT

### SECTION 1 - APPLICANT INFORMATION

n/a

Library Jurisdiction Name

Mendocino County Library

Library/Organization Director Name

Karen Horner

Library/Organization Director Title

CSA Director/ County Librarian

Library/Organization Director Email Address

[hornerk@mendocinocounty.org \(mailto:hornerk@mendocinocounty.org\)](mailto:hornerk@mendocinocounty.org)

Library/Organization Director Business Phone Number

7072342872

Library/Organization Director Street Address/P.O. Box

880 North Bush Street

Library/Organization Director City

Ukiah

Library/Organization Director Zip Code

95482

Project Coordinator Name

Nicole Bird

Project Coordinator Title

Branch Librarian

Project Coordinator Email Address

[birdn@mendocinocounty.org \(mailto:birdn@mendocinocounty.org\)](mailto:birdn@mendocinocounty.org)

Project Coordinator Business Phone Number

707-459-5908

Name of Learning Space Location

Willits Branch Library

Address of Learning Space

390 E. Commercial Street Willits, CA. 95490

SECTION 2 - PROJECT INFORMATION

n/a

1. Tell us about your community and library and the needs that this project would address.

Mendocino County Library serves rural population in Mendocino County, a rugged, rural, geographically isolated and diverse area of Northern California. The branch that would be utilizing this grant is the Willits Branch of Mendocino County Library, located in the small town of Willits. Willits during the last census has a population of 4,888. The library also serves rural outlying areas with a population of over 40% Hispanic and several Native American tribes including the Sherwood Valley Rancheria of Pomo Indians. Willits has a median income of roughly \$35,800 which is less than half of the California median income. The Willits Branch Library is the community hub of Willits, providing activities and resources for children, families, and adults that are not available anywhere else in the community. Willits Branch Library also provides the only free meeting room for local residents to meet and learn. The Willits Branch Library provides programs, classes, crafts, presenters, Summer Reading Programs, educational programs, lectures, gardening and seed saving programs and author talks throughout the year for all residents and other visitors. Local public schools, charter schools and homeschool groups utilize the library as destinations for field trips and as their resource for materials. The Willits Branch Library is active in the community and is considered vital to the survival of this area. The Willits Branch Library was originally housed in a Carnegie Library Building until it moved to its current space and opened in 1989. The current space has never been updated, or reconfigured. While it is a much loved library, the functionality and design of the space does not allow for constant change in community needs and growth. To be able to have access to a professional designer that will provide direction and insight to how best utilize the large open space that makes up the library will be a great asset. This will allow the library to meet the ever growing demands by the community as the library is utilized more as the community hub.

2. What sources of information (e.g., surveys, staff and patron feedback) have you used to determine the needs to be addressed in this project?

In the past the Willits Branch Library has conducted patron surveys to address the needs of the community. The survey has asked what the community wants from the library and what is missing from the library. If awarded the grant the Willits branch Library will conduct another survey online and in the branch asking for ideas and needs of the space from the community. In the past County Librarian and Branch Librarian have visited other libraries with the same layout and square footage to provide potential ideas for space layout

and furniture ideas.

3. Describe your underutilized space including its size, how it is being used today, and its current challenges and limitations.

The Willits Branch Library is currently housed in a classic early 1980's brick building. It is one large open space with shelving along the wall and the center of the library housing tables and a make shift public computer area. It is roughly 7,000 square feet with a meeting room that provides an area for programs and meetings. The lighting for the library is dated and doesn't allow for a lot of natural light in the library. The circulation desk is at the front of the library and opens up into the public area with no clear division between staff and public area. The library currently utilizes the meeting room to house all programs, lectures, crafts, storytimes and all other library events. The library staff has done their best to define a children's area, teen area, reading area and newspaper area but there is no clear division, or ability to eliminate noise or distraction between areas. Tables, public computers and DVD shelves are all located in the center of the library. There is no outlets for patron technology needs or growth for public computers, so extension cords and power strips are used to supplement technology needs. Staff work space is extremely minimal, with limited work space and doesn't allow for enough division between public and staff space. Any storage of library carts or extra supplies has to be kept in circulation area or meeting room and moved around to accommodate activities in the library. Library stacks are only found on the outer edges of the library along the wall which limits the collection and the ability to create different layouts and separation of collections. All seating is in the center of the library which creates issue as people who are seeking quiet reading and studying areas with groups who are using technology or working together or basic socializing. The library also houses the Literacy Center and by redesigning the functionality they could be a designated space for tutoring. Currently the Literacy Center utilizes the open space or meeting room in the library but most work with all other needs of the library.

4. What objectives do you have for and what outcomes do you expect from a successfully transformed space? Please be specific and include how you will measure success.

The objective for a transformed space of the Willits Branch Library will be an area that better serves the community as a whole. The ability to provide a wonderful children's space, allowing for activities, storytime and school visits without disrupting other patrons. A designated teen area where local teens can feel welcomed and provide a hangout after school and during the Summer. There currently is no other area that provides this resource in the community. A quiet reading area, where patrons can read a book, newspaper or magazine

without the disruption from other library activities. A clear technology area that allows for better public computer and printing demands and allowing work spaces with electrical outlets for people that bring their own devices. Through the creation and design of better functionality of space, different groups in our community will find the library more welcoming. With a clearly designed and defined teen space, the library can provide a much needed space for teens to gather and utilize. This space will make it easier to appeal to teens to join and grow our Teen Advisory Group and provide more services for teens. The redesign of the children's area will allow us to further grow the appeal of a safe place for caregivers and schools to utilize the library. Redesigning the Willits branch would benefit the Literacy Center which is housed in the Willits Branch Library perhaps providing a more designated area for tutoring and learning. Success will be measured by the ability of us to increase the usage of the space by monitoring the activities and patrons utilizing the library. If awarded the design grant, after receiving the design grant, reaching out to the community for their input and the ability to make changes at our branch to meet the needs of the community will be a success.

5. How will your participation align with the project goal of transforming underutilized spaces to maximize their potential for reading, literacy, and learning?

If the Mendocino County Library is lucky enough to be awarded this wonderful grant, it will help to provide much needed assistance and guidance in updating and reworking the functionality of the Willits Branch Library to better serve the public and be more conducive to the changing needs of a public library space. Through the redesigning of the space, this will allow the library to utilize the building it has to maximize the needs of the space, to allow for children and teen STEM activities, craft time, storytime, literacy and tutoring, technology support and provide reading areas for all. The redesigning of the space could allow for more growth in our collection which could provide more defined collections for literacy, bilingual education, parenting, Native American and local special interest, making it easier for patrons to locate.

6. Detail any in-kind, match funding, community participation, or any other support you expect for this project. Identify the group, type of support, and amount of support for each.

The Willits Branch Library will utilize in kind funding from Mendocino County Library annual budget to provide staff time and other resources needed beyond the grant funds awarded. Depending on the completion of the design grant and the recommendations from a designer, then Mendocino County Library will move forward with the potential plan of project completion. The Willits Branch Library has a very active and supportive Friends of the Library group who is supportive in the overall improvement of space of the Willits

Branch Library. The amount of support will be determined based on the design recommendations from the designer if furniture , shelving or other materials are needed to improve the space.

7. Explain how you will ensure the success of your project coordinator and the project itself including any organizational support you will provide.

The project will be overseen by Karen Horner, County Librarian and CSA Director. The project coordinator will be Nicole Bird, the Willits Branch Librarian. As the project coordinator, Nicole will have the full support of the County Librarian and Library Administration along with her own staff to ensure the execution of the grant. Mendocino County Library has been awarded other LSTA grants and the Library Administration provides full support and assistance in making sure every grant meets all the demands and expectations. Following timeline and deadlines, County Librarian will meet weekly with Project Coordinator to plan and track timelines and goals.

### SECTION 3 - Design Opportunity Questions

n/a

Detail your vision for the future of the space including specific ideas you may for improving it.

The Willits Branch is looking to have space that is adaptable and flexible to meet current and future needs (e.g. easily movable furniture to create open space for performances etc.)(movable shelving). The library is also looking for ways to create noise barriers and looking for ways to create more access to power sources. Another need is to create some private/group study spaces that are separate from the main space. A define space for Teens that create a welcoming space for them with the purpose of increasing their presence in the library. More efficient circulation area that supports staff work and provides an area for reference services. Clear definition of staff work area and public space. Organization and efficiency of staff work area to allow for program preparation and planning and also defined space for collection management and processing of materials. Better design and furniture recommendations to allow for future growth of public computer area and defined individual computer stations.

Provide any estimate(s) you've obtained for this project, describe how you've obtained this information, explain your plans to contract with a designer, and, if applicable, obtain additional funding needed

If awarded the grant, Mendocino County Library will work within our county policy to seek a designer to provide space design for the Willits Branch. We are unable to receive estimates unless we go through our county process so we have to wait until grant awarded. Once awarded the first step will be the process of looking for quotes and design proposals. This will be done through a RFQ and RFP process. If the 10,000 grant funding is not enough the library will provide in kind funding for the design.

Share any additional comments or information that supports your participation in this project.

The opportunity for the Willits Branch Library to redesign and rethink the functionality of its Branch will be a wonderful gift to a library that represents underserved populations in a geographically isolated area. Willits is a small rural community that relies on the library to provide materials, resources, services, programs, learning, recreation, and information for all ages. The residents look to the Willits Branch Library to be the community hub and the ability to transform this space to better serve the community that loves and supports the library will be a wonderful gift to the community. The Willits Branch Library is in demand for a better functioning layout and use of space. The library has served the community during emergencies and tragedies but unfortunately the layout of the space hinders the efficiency of staff to serve the needs of the patrons. During the Mendocino Redwood Complex Fire in October 2017, the Willits Branch Library provided shelter, community information, WiFi and power to Willits and surrounding communities. Cal Fire, county emergency and local agencies utilized the library to provide information to the community, hold press updates and an area for people to come and gather information. Hundreds and hundreds of people gathered at the library throughout the week to connect to WiFi, connect with neighbors, pick up gas masks and get updated on news as everyone in area was cut off from information. The Willits Branch Library is the hub of the community and the space needs to reflect the requirements and demands on it.

#### Budget Overview



DesignSpaceMendoCounty\_1.xlsx (/file/download/...

**CIPA Acknowledgment**

Not Subject to CIPA Requirements. The CIPA requirements do not apply because no funds made available under this LSTA grant program will be used to purchase computers used to access the Internet or to pay for direct costs associated with accessing the Internet.

**LIBRARY DIRECTOR CERTIFICATION**

Karen Horner