



PROJECT PROPOSAL

Rhome Community Library

Capital Campaign

Rhome Community Library

Formerly Known As – Rhome Public Library
Begins a new chapter in its 60 year-old story!

New Library Building!!

Community -- Commitment

Perseverance

Contents

SUMMARY 3

INTRODUCTION 4

 Mission4

 Our Story.....4

 Activities and Services4

 Summer reading programs.....5

 Technology.5

 ESL classes,.....5

 Accreditation5

NEEDS/ISSUES..... 5

Permanent building5

 Physical locations.....5

Larger space/building6

 Increase in use of library facilities.6

 Technology.6

Plan for area growth and increase in population6

Past efforts of building fund raising7

WHY SHOULD YOU DONATE? 7

 Libraries Provide a Great Return on Investment:.....7

CITATIONS 8

LETTER OF SUPPORT 9



Summary

For the past 60 years, Rhome Community Library operated through community involvement, volunteers, donations, perseverance, and commitment. This proposal presents a new chapter in the story of the Rhome library as we begin planning the construction of a much needed, permanent home in a new building.

The Rhome Community Library (RCL) is a non-profit corporation operated exclusively for educational and charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. A volunteer Board of Directors supervises the daily operations as well as seeks funding through donations and grants.

Located in the City of Rhome, RCL serves the residents in the southeast corner of Wise County. The children and young adults in this community attend elementary and middle schools in both the Northwest Independent School District (NISD) and Boyd Independent School District (BISD). Each district has, based on the high number of economically disadvantaged families in the area, designated Title 1 campuses that are in the service area of RCL. (Texas Education Association, 2020). RCL is the only library in this rapidly expanding community. Currently there are 2878 households within the 76078 zip code area, but with several new developments surrounding the city, an explosion of residents and population is assured. (Zip Code 76078 Profile, Map and Demographics):

- New residential developments bringing approximately 12,000 plus homes to this area within two years (Dickson, 2019)
- Northwest Independent School District (NISD) will increase 100,000 students in next 25 to 30 years with about one-third of that being in Wise County according to the Fort Worth Star Telegram article (Dickson, 2019)
- Wise County population expected to increase to 105,797 residents by 2045 according to data from the North Central Texas Council of Governments (Dickson, 2019)
- The library serves three additional cities in southeast Wise County with a population of 14,404

Not only is the area expanding, but RCL has already experienced substantial increase in the use of the library and services. With improved services, programs, and facility from grants provided by the Tocker Foundation and The Priddy Foundation, the use of the library increased during 2015-2019 as shown in percentage of increase below:

65%	Visitors/Patrons	357%	Program attendance	73%	Computer use
322%	Circulation of materials	347%	ILL use (2016 – 2019)	12%	Wi-Fi use inside
		398%	Fax use		

The use of grant funds greatly increased the ability of the library to provide the community services, resources, and books in our current location. Presently RCL occupies a renovated house of about 2000 square feet, which is not enough space for the needs of the community. In order to continue serving our expanding community for the next 60 years, a new building is the next logical step to the continued success of the library and monetary support is needed at this time. To accomplish this goal, monetary support is necessary.

All contributing donors will be recognized in a variety of ways, including naming opportunities. Please ask for more information on recognition of donors and customizing a giving option just for you and your organization.

To keep this community dream alive, land has been purchased in the City of Rhome for the construction of a new permanent library building. The anticipated budget for the new building is \$1,200,000, which includes construction of an approximate 5800 square foot building, parking lot, and necessary equipment as specified by Magee Architects in Fort Worth, Texas.



Introduction

Every great community has a central place to commemorate its heritage, culture and hope for the future. For most, it is the library. It holds the archives of the past, a path to first see the outside world through books and publications. It is a place to spark the dreams in the young.

The Rhome Community Library has sought to be all those things and more. But as Rhome has grown, so has the need to expand the library and its presence. The current home has served the community well, but it simply is no longer effectively able to meet the future. Rhome Library provides access to books, programs, and services that promote literacy and lifelong learning opportunities for our community.

Mission

The mission of Rhome Community Library is to provide services, programming, and materials that are available to all residents in order to develop an engaged community and encourage lifelong learners.

Our Story

The Rhome Community Library, the first library in Wise County, opened in December 1960 led by sixteen ladies. As a cherished source of community pride, the library exists as a labor of love staffed by community volunteers.

What a journey for the Rhome Library since it started so many years ago. It all began when a terminally ill young boy dreamed about leaving a legacy for those left behind. He wanted to memorialize those who died after him with a library. When his mother told her friends of his request, they spread the word and shortly received books, money and volunteers, and a closet-sized room location behind City Hall. Within 13 years, the library grew too large for the small room and seized the opportunity to expand when offered the recently vacated city hall building. Within another ten years, the library doubled in size and opened a children's room in the recently vacated fire hall. By the turn of the century, once again the Library had moved and leased a larger building on Main Street.

With continued growth and the benevolent help of a landlord, the Library continues to grow in its present location on B.C. Rhome Avenue since September 2010. These many moves indicate how important the Library's growth is to the community as well as shows the dedication and determination of the volunteers of the Rhome community! The Rhome Library is unique in that it is owned by no one person but operates by a board of directors selected from the community.

Since its inception, people have donated many books in memory of their loved ones. The library continues to serve the fourth generation users of this community as well as new residents in the city and surrounding areas.

Activities and Services

Providing only print materials in the early days, the library now offers varied services, resources and programs to all ages:

- Collection—approximately 10,000 materials, including books, audiobooks, and DVDs
- Free membership cards for Wise County residents and families of NISD
- Online catalog accessed from any Internet service includes free access to Inter-Library Loan (ILL), TexShare Databases, Overdrive eBooks and eAudiobooks, and other databases
- Meeting room for community use
- Education programs and events for all ages scheduled throughout the year



- Preschool Story Time
- 1000 Books Before Kindergarten
- Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math (STEAM) activity
- Tail Waggin' Therapy Reading Dog
- Book Clubs
- Senior citizens tax preparation
- Assistance for job seekers
- Technology support

Summer reading programs for children have always been a priority for the library. Even today former participants bring their children to take part in current summer programs. Summer reading programs promote literacy, love of reading, and encourage students to use skills necessary when they return to school. A love of reading opens opportunities through life.

For the past three years, 15 local business sponsors and three individuals have invested in the children/youth of our community by providing \$10,070 for summer reading programs. A total of 547 children attended 69 summer programs, with 458 parents involved during the three-year period.

Technology. Many in our area lack basic community and/or Internet services; the Library provides computers for these services at no charge. Technology services include:

- Computer access and printing
- Copier
- Wi-Fi (free)
- Fax Machine

ESL classes, developed in collaboration with a local Spanish church, were scheduled to begin in March 2020. But ESL classes, along with other face to face programs, have been temporarily suspended due to the Covid-19 virus pandemic.

Accreditation by the Texas State Library Archives Commission (TSLAC) for the past three year enabled the library to offer the Inter-Library Loan (ILL) program and TexShare databases. The library is accredited again for the year 2020-2021.

Few things in this life are as necessary to personal success as the ability to read, think, and explore new information as it becomes available. For people in small rural communities the local library is the hub of access for information and knowledge. The RCL has continued to evolve and grow in its commitment to the education and betterment of the citizens of our community.

Needs/Issues

Permanent building

Physical locations. The Rhome Community Library has never had a permanent location, which required moving to five different locations during the past 60 years. Although the library is not officially part of the city, the library shared three of the city's empty spaces when available.

When city space was no longer available in the late 1990s, the library leased a building on Main Street. In September 2010, as the library's collection and patron use continued to increase, the board of directors



leased a small house, about 2000 square feet, including garage, at 265 West B.C. Rhome Avenue, which was renovated for our library use by the landlord. The landlord is now ready to sell this property.

In October 2020, through the generous support of the current owner, Rhome Community Library will purchase the building with an extraordinary agreement allowing the monthly mortgage payment to remain the same as our former lease expense. Additionally, when the new library location is completed, the current location will be sold and any excess funds will be moved toward the new building and its maintenance.

Upon completion of the new building, those funds being used for mortgage payments will be redirected toward books, programs, and other services for the community. Though the house has served the library well and continues to be its primary location, it does not provide adequate space for the services provided. We look forward to being permanently located in a building large enough to serve an expanding community and to spend funds on services for our patrons.

Larger space/building

Increase in use of library facilities. The library was blessed in 2015 and 2016 with grants from Tocker Foundation and The Priddy Foundation providing the library with improved facilities and program services. Thus, over the last five years, the library experienced increased use as shown in the areas in the table on the right.

Technology. In the past two years, RCL has seen an increase in people needing technology assistance and even more since the pandemic began in March 2020. Learning environments are evolving and the technological needs of the community are growing. For students who do not have access to the internet in their homes, the library provides an accessible place to obtain this resource for free, as well as technology assistance, and additional materials and resources as needed.

Users of Library Services 2015-2019		
	FY 2015	FY 2019
• Visitors/Patrons	2554	4224
• Circulation of materials	1432	6050
• Program attendance	220	1006
• Computer use	303	525
• Wi-Fi use inside	12	151
• FAX use	46	229
• ILL* use (2016 - 2019)	15	67

*Inter-Library Loan

With usage increase comes the need for improved technology, including upgrading the interior network and equipment to provide better computer and printing services.

Meeting Room. Rhome Veterans, Girl Scouts, homeschool families, and others organizations were in need of a place to meet. After converting the garage to an activity room with a grant from The Priddy Foundation in 2016, the library met another need of the community—providing a meeting room. Since the size of the activity room began to not meet the needs of these groups, a community room with capacity of 100 people has been added to the proposed floor plan.

Plan for area growth and increase in population

The Rhome Community Library serves all of Wise County residents and particularly those in the southeast corner of the county which includes Boyd, Aurora, New Fairview and surrounding areas in addition to the City of Rhome. The combined population for these cities is 14,404 (Zipcode.org). Being relatively close to the DFW metroplex, developments are expanding rapidly toward the southeast corner of Wise County

Three new developments are planned for the Rhome area with two already under construction. These new developments will only bring more residents and businesses to our community:



- **PMB Capital Investments**: A mixed use community on 3400 acres adjacent to the City of Rhome, brings increased activity to Rhome and the area. This development includes retail, 800 acres of open areas and trails as well as 10,000+ homes. This is the largest master planned community in this part of North Texas, boosting population in the area (PMB Capital, 2019).
- **VLMC Inc., Riverside Homes**: Fairview Meadows, located a quarter of a mile north of Rhome at Hwy 81/287 and Pioneer Road, currently has 88 home sites planned on one acre lots. Construction began last year with 30 homes sold, with several homes now ready for sale (Riverside Homebuilders).
- **Northstar Development**: Located five miles south of Rhome on Hwy 81/287 and on the Wise/Tarrant County line, this development plans for 2000 plus home on 750 acres. This development is within NISD, and RCL serves the students and families of NISD. (Dickson, 2018).

According to a Fort Worth Star-Telegram article, November 13, 2019, the school district will increase to 100,000 students in the next 25 to 30 years with about 1/3 of that being in Wise County. Wise County’s population is expected to increase to 105,797 residents by 2045 according to data from the North Central Texas Council of Governments, which is an increase of 55% (Dickson, 2019).

Past efforts of building fund raising

For many years, past board members planned, worked, and saved toward securing a location and building for this library. Along with fundraising efforts through the years and a large donation in 2016, the library secured a large lot in the city in 2018 that provides good visibility and access for a new library.

The biggest obstacle is limited businesses in the area to provide construction funding. Within the 76078 zip code, there are 2878 households with an average income of \$45,581 per household, and an average house value of \$118,500 (76078 Zip Code). Despite the current number of households and few businesses, the need for the RCL will only grow.

Why should you donate?

Libraries Provide a Great Return on Investment:

- An economic booster shot for the downtown area. An expanded and refreshed library will add value to the downtown/Old Town area as a desirable destination.
- Libraries are anchors in their community – they draw traffic into commerce centers and encourage related businesses to locate nearby.
- Studies show for every \$1 invested in libraries, nearly \$5 returns to the community (Bureau of Business Research IC² Institute, 2017).
- The expansion/renovation will create essential local construction jobs.

The accomplishment of this endeavor all depends on the support of donors/supporters like you! All donations are greatly appreciated—large or small—it all adds up!



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Letter of Support

August 24, 2020

Rhome Community Library
P. O. Box 427
Rhome, Texas 76078



To whom it may concern:

The Tocker Foundation promotes Texas public libraries in communities of 12,000 or less. We assist over 100 libraries a year with projects that provide benefits to the community. Our foundation works closely with universities, Texas State Library, Texas Library Association and other philanthropic organizations. The due diligence of the foundation includes the review of the annual library report filed with the Texas State Library, product research and on-site visits. Our grant applications are reviewed by a grant review committee of librarians appointed by the Texas Library Association.

Libraries, such as Rhome, seeking to improve their facilities typically reach out to our foundation because of our past support and dedication to rural, public libraries. Our unique process adds industry expertise to help libraries rethink the entire space for current patron use with an eye to the future for growth and innovation.

A great wave of transformation has developed, however public library projects of this type are not possible within a typical library's operating budget. Extraordinary assistance is vital. We encourage the libraries to reach out to additional funders to complete the project in one effort rather than several phases. To further assist their fundraising activities, our office is ready to share information from our due diligence in support of this project.

I encourage you to consider the Rhome Community Library project in your philanthropic efforts.

Please contact me at the Tocker Foundation if I can offer any further information. I appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darryl Tocker".

Darryl Tocker

Executive Director



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