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Crowdfunding Campaign Launched for the “Friends of The Ironwood Carnegie Library Community Center Project”

\$50,000 goal to win matching grant through MEDC’s Public Spaces Community Places initiative



Rendering Credit: Meyer Group

LANSING, Mich. – An effort to expand the oldest operating Carnegie Library in Michigan is happening in Ironwood. This effort will be fulfilled through the anticipated success of a [crowdfunding campaign](#) that the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the Friends of the Ironwood Carnegie Library announced today, which is being offered through the Michigan-based crowdfunding platform Patronicity.

If the campaign reaches its crowdfunding goal of \$50,000 by June 29th, the project will win a matching grant with funds made possible by MEDC’s Public Spaces Community Places (PSCP) program. For project details and to donate, please visit: patronicity.com/ironwood.

“Libraries are not only critical public institutions, but in some communities, they act as the primary community gathering space,” said **MEDC Regional Prosperity Managing Director Paula Holtz**. “This is the case with the Ironwood Carnegie Library and we are pleased to

support and provide resources for this expansion project through our Public Spaces Community Places program.”

For over 120 years, the Ironwood Carnegie Library has stood as a beacon of knowledge, opportunity, and hope in the Ironwood community. Built in 1901 through a gift from Andrew Carnegie, the very iron that fueled his industrial empire was mined from the lands surrounding the historic library. This library goes beyond lending books; it is a vital cornerstone of the downtown and community in Ironwood.



The library offers extensive and free public programming as well as a gathering space for events and activities in the community and the demand for offerings has long exceeded the footprint of the space. This campaign will finally create new space with an addition that is seamlessly connected to the beautiful historic library. This new community center space will transform the library experience, bringing children and teens from the current basement level to a vibrant and flexible area designed for diverse programming. It will also allow new opportunities to use existing space in the current library area as the basement is made accessible with room for programs, job interviews, and additional resources.

“We are so fortunate that this opportunity came along at such a crucial time for the library and the Friends of the Library capital campaign. Like many rural areas, we face economic challenges that can limit the giving capacity of so many of our residents who want to support this wonderful expansion,” said **Marie Peterson, Friends of the Library Vice**

President/Project Liaison. “If we hit our goal, this will transform every donated dollar into two and make everyone's investment in the library go twice as far. It demonstrates that every contribution, no matter the amount, is valued and can create significant change.”

[Public Spaces Community Places](https://patronicity.com/puremichigan) is a collaborative effort of the MEDC, the Michigan Municipal League and Patronicity, in which local residents can use crowdfunding to be part of the development of strategic projects in their communities and be backed with a matching grant from MEDC. Communities, nonprofits and other business entities can apply at <https://patronicity.com/puremichigan>.

“The Michigan Municipal League is a firm believer in the importance of building community wealth,” said **Dan Gilmartin, CEO and Executive Director of the League**. “This project does just that. By updating and restoring the historic Carnegie Library building, the library will be enhanced in its role as a beloved resource and community gathering place. It’s a wonderful investment in Ironwood’s future.”

The Public Spaces Community Places initiative started in 2014 with MEDC providing matched funding of up to \$50,000 for community improvement projects throughout Michigan. As of May 1, 2025, MEDC has provided more than \$13.9 million in matching grants. Since the launch of the program, 409 projects have been successful in reaching their goal, with more than \$15.9 million raised from 74,663 individual donors. Communities have a 97 percent success rate in achieving their goals and earning matching funds.

About Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation is the state’s marketing arm and lead advocate for business development, job awareness and community development with the focus on growing Michigan’s economy. For more information on the MEDC and our initiatives, visit www.MichiganBusiness.org. For Pure Michigan® tourism information, your trip begins at www.michigan.org. Join the conversation on: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#).

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