



Contact: Jessica Emonds
Communications and Marketing Director
jemonds@hplct.org
(c) 860-559-4873
November 20, 2024

PUBLIC SERVICE RETURNS TO HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY'S DOWNTOWN LIBRARY

A ribbon cutting welcomed back the public

(Hartford, CT) – On Wednesday, November 20, at 11:00 a.m., Hartford Public Library (HPL) held a celebratory ribbon cutting to welcome the public back through the Downtown Library's Main Street doors after almost two years of repairs and restorations.

The ribbon cutting celebration marks the completion of the first phase of the renovation. In attendance were HPL President and CEO Bridget E. Quinn, Speaker of the House State Representative Matt Ritter, Hartford Mayor Arunan Arulampalam, UConn Hartford Campus Library Director Karen Tatarka, and HPL Board Chair David Barrett. Starting November 20, customers can access a large section of the first floor, including adult collections, a small selection of children and teen collections, computers, passports, municipal IDs, and The American Place services.

"We are excited to welcome the public back to the Downtown Library and look forward to sharing the newly renovated space," said Bridget E. Quinn, HPL President and CEO. "This project is about more than just repairs—it's an investment in the future of Hartford and an opportunity to create a dynamic, inclusive, and forward-thinking space for learning, innovation, and community connection."

On December 23, 2022, the Downtown Library sustained severe water damage due to faulty rooftop HVAC units. Water poured through multiple floors of the building, damaging ceilings, walls, elevator shafts, and furniture. During the repair process, HPL took the opportunity to reimagine the Downtown Library's interior spaces, incorporating design changes that enhance operational efficiency and customer experience, improving both its operational efficiency and customer experience.

"The reopening of the Hartford Public Library Downtown is something to celebrate – a massive accomplishment that took a team effort," said Speaker of the House Matt Ritter (D-Hartford). "The flood damage to the Downtown Library in 2022 was a huge blow to a community pillar in the heart of downtown. Seeing the doors closed on Main Street for the past two years has been tough for the entire city."

Phase 2 of the renovation, set to begin in early 2025, will include further enhancements to the Library's facilities, including the development of more specialized spaces and services to meet the growing needs of Hartford's diverse community. Phase 2 focuses on enhancing the Library's role in



supporting critical urban programming such as workforce development, small business support, digital literacy, youth education, and social services.

“Having previously served on the Board of the Hartford Public Library, I know first-hand the incredible dedication and grit that HPL’s team has employed to meet the rising challenges they have faced,” said Hartford Mayor Arunan Arulampalam. “The flood on Christmas Day almost two years ago had a huge impact on the entire community that relied on their services. This announcement is a major milestone.”

“The Downtown Library is more than a place to check out books – It is a hub of student activities, local services, business resources, and a social meeting place. Our city is stronger with HPL’s Downtown Library as a resource,” said Speaker of the House Matt Ritter (D-Hartford).

Starting November 20, you can visit the Downtown Library Monday through Thursday, 9:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.; Friday, 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.; Saturday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

About Hartford Public Library

Founded as the Library Company in 1774, and over its 250 years, Hartford Public Library (HPL) has remained at the forefront of redefining the urban library experience in the 21st century. The Library has seven full-service locations, two Boundless Library locations, and multiple outreach services, including the Library on Wheels and Story Stash, a 24-7 pickup locker. HPL provides education, intellectual enrichment, and cultural development for thousands of children, youth, and adults. HPL has gained local and national recognition for its wide range of new initiatives and partnerships designed to meet the needs of a diverse and dynamic city and region, including immigration services, employment assistance, and youth leadership training. For more information, visit hplct.org, and follow us on social media ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [X \(Twitter\)](#)).

###