

Fulton County Board of Commissioners Approves Authorization for 2008 Library Bond Referendum

Atlanta – On November 4, 2008 Fulton County voters will vote on a \$275 million bond referendum for the construction, expansion and renovation of their public libraries.

If approved, the bonds would provide funding for the detailed Library Facility Master Plan, which includes 8 new libraries, expansion of 2 libraries, and renovation of 23 libraries. The bond issue also includes \$84 million for the construction of a new Central Library, with the remaining (approximately \$85 million) coming from private funds.

The library's master plan was developed over the course of 24 months and included a series of public input sessions throughout the county. The plan maintains 34 libraries, the current number of libraries in the system, by eliminating leased spaces and its oldest libraries. Fulton County last issued a library bond in 1988.

"I am glad that the Board took this opportunity to demonstrate vision and leadership," said Commissioner Robb Pitts (District 2, At-Large). "The cost for average homeowners will be less than the cost of a cup of coffee every month. Certainly an investment in the education of our children is worth that and more."

"A public private partnership will not only make the new Central Library more financially feasible, but it presents an opportunity for private citizens and the business and philanthropic community to demonstrate their support for their library system," said Commissioner Nancy A. Boxill (District 6). "I am confident that our community will step forward to build a central library that is as outstanding as the vibrant community in which it is located."

John F. Szabo, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System Director, said, "This is a great day for libraries and for the Fulton County citizens who value what libraries bring to their community. We are grateful for the leadership of the Board of Commissioners in recognizing the importance of public libraries and to the citizens who continue to voice their support and opinions. We are one step closer to having the world-class library system we know Fulton County residents want and deserve."

A summary of the Library Master Plan is available on the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System website, www.afpls.org.