

"A good library is a place, a palace where the lofty spirits of all nations and generations meet."

Samuel Niger (1883-1956)

A Cornerstone of Castro Valley's future

Castro Valley—a growing, thriving community—deserves a public library that will educate, entertain, inspire and enlighten.

The current library has served us well for 40 years but is sadly outdated and far too crowded and small. With only 10,239 square feet to accommodate more than 57,000 residents, patrons are often seen rubbing elbows in the library stacks. The shelves are overcrowded, and readers compete for space with the current technology needed to meet visitors' demands. Safety is also an issue. Outside traffic flow and insufficient parking have led to daily frustration and even to the injury of a young customer while crossing busy Redwood Road. The current building fails to meet seismic requirements.

Here as everywhere in the United States, the library plays an essential role in the social, economic, political and educational structure of the community. Libraries are vital meeting places that help break down barriers between young and old, English-speaking and non-English-speaking. They keep citizens informed and provide students with both materials and a safe and quiet place to study. In the past five years alone, use of the Castro Valley Library has increased by 46 percent. With projections that the population of Castro Valley will reach 66,000 by 2020, the need for a new public library is critical. This has been recognized by the State of California and Alameda County, which last year awarded \$22.7 million to fund construction of a new Castro Valley Library at 3600 Norbridge Ave. Now is the time for the community to step in, as the Alameda County Library Foundation plans a major capital campaign to raise an additional \$4 million in community funding to purchase enhanced collection materials, technology, furniture and equipment to outfit the 33,750 square feet of the new facility. The new library will feature space for a collection at least 50 percent bigger than the current library and a Children's Area that will be twice as large as the current one.

Continuing a tradition of excellence

Over the years, Castro Valley has made tremendous strides toward becoming a model community. Its school system shines as a model of academic excellence, and just this year the new Castro Valley Center for the Arts—Castro Valley's first professionally equipped theater and performing arts center, opened its doors. Retail businesses thrive as the downtown area prospers.