



NEWS

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December 15, 2023

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Feedback Sought from Residents of Clinton County A Study of Options for a Countywide Multi-Purpose Facility and Network of Library Services Recently Funded

PLATTSBURG, Mo., Dec. 14, 2023—The Clinton County Initiative is excited to announce that USDA-Rural Development is funding, in part, a feasibility study to determine if establishing a multi-purpose facility and network to house modern-day library services for children and adults, remote workspaces, educational programs for all ages, and other public services not currently offered in the county is possible. The group is looking at the potential short- and long-term benefits to new and established businesses from agriculture to real estate and retail, early childhood education, workforce development opportunities, and overall lifelong quality of life, among other advantages. An online survey (<https://bit.ly/CCIFocusGroup>) has been launched for all those who live, learn, work, and play here to determine what people would like and use the most if such a center of resources were established.

In addition to the survey, the public is invited to attend community forums being held in January, 2024. All Community Forums are planned to start at 7:00 p.m. on the following dates: Mon., Jan. 8 at the Gower Senior Center; Tues., Jan. 9 at the Cameron Library; Thur., Jan. 18 at El Rey Mexican Restaurant in Trimble; Mon., Jan. 22 at the Community Courtyard in Plattsburg; and, Tues., Jan. 30 at The Brazelton Center in Lathrop. These gatherings and the survey are residents' and other stakeholders' chance to share their thoughts and ideas for what a facility and network of services could look like.

The feasibility (a.k.a. possibility) study is the follow-up action to the needs and desires shared by several hundred participants in the 2021-2022 Dream Big Listening Project conducted by The Clinton County Initiative. Respondents from several age groups determined the need for business, job growth, and innovation opportunities as a top priority along with the needs of accessible and reliable high-speed broadband. Coming in as a close second was other public services such as an accessible library and center with fun and interesting activities for people of all ages in addition to those already in existence through churches, schools, and sports.

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“Meeting our community’s needs is complex, so the group decided to apply for a grant that would determine how best to deliver what residents are asking for,” said Joe Gagnon, president of the group. “We need as many people to participate as possible. Since we’re not talking about a traditional books-only sort of facility and looking at the many partnership and program content options available to give all county residents access to information and services not available to them now, people have been eager to share their ideas.”

There are three teams splitting up the work with Christel Gollnick, JUPER Communications from Trimble, helping coordinate the effort along with Jan Schwarz from Gower. Jim Patrico from Plattsburg is heading up the Content Team, Chad Howerton from Lathrop is leading the Facilities Team, and Debbie Davis from Turney is leading the Marketing Team. We have people from all communities involved, including the director of Cameron’s City Library.

Gollnick shared, “A project like this will take all of our communities working together in the shared vision of ensuring the county thrives while also respecting our proud past and the need to be very wise with our resources. We will share the study’s findings with anyone interested once we’ve completed our report next Spring. Right now, we’re focused on finding a reasonable solution to a gap in services that has been a challenge for many residents in our county for decades. It’s encouraging to see so much positive energy being expressed.”

The Clinton County Initiative’s mission statement is, “We come together to create a growing economy, an inclusive and diverse countywide community, and a vibrant learning environment as the building blocks of a GREAT RURAL LIFE.” For more information about this nonprofit organization, how to get involved, the guidance they are using, "The Maximize [My Community] Journey Framework" through Maximize NWMO/The Community Foundation of Northwest Missouri, and funding received please visit <https://www.maximizenwmo.org/clinton-county> or contact their team at together@maximizenwmo.org.

About Maximize NWMO

Maximize NWMO serves the region in a neutral role providing administrative, communications, data access, and coaching support on systems-thinking and community wealth building for individuals, communities and the region. The initiative’s Navigation Team supports leaders and communities who want to *dream big, decide wisely, and maximize our region’s potential by growing together*. Maximize NWMO is the regional vitality initiative of The Community Foundation of Northwest Missouri. It is made possible through partnerships with Communities of Excellence 2026, the United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA-RD), University of Missouri Extension, and several private and corporate donors. For more information, visit www.maximizenwmo.org.

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ATTACHED: QR Code to Survey URL at <https://bit.ly/CCIFocusGroup>