Brooklyn Public Library Announces Development Partner for New Brooklyn Heights Library

Brooklyn Public Library (BPL) has unveiled plans for the new Brooklyn Heights Library, a project that also will generate more than $40M in capital funding to repair other BPL branches with urgent capital needs, and create 114 units of affordable housing. The state-of-the-art, 21,000 square foot library – one of the largest in the BPL system – will be part of a mixed use building at 280 Cadman Plaza West to be developed by the Hudson Companies, Inc. The selection of Hudson Companies as the development partner was approved by the BPL Board of Trustees at their meeting Tuesday night.

The project will benefit library users throughout the borough. More than $40M from the $52M sale will be invested in neighborhood branches with urgent capital needs, significantly reducing the current $300 million in deferred maintenance across BPL's 60-branch system. BPL has identified three libraries that will be among those receiving funds from the project: Walt Whitman, which will receive $6M for upgraded infrastructure and branch modernization; Pacific, which will receive $3.5M for a new entry and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and Washington Irving, which will receive $4M for upgraded infrastructure. Branches receiving proceeds from the project will be chosen based on their overall outstanding critical needs, the opportunity for comprehensive upgrades, and their spread across the borough.

The project will replace the aging building on Cadman Plaza West, which requires more than $9 million in repairs, with a brand new facility. The building that will house the library, designed by Marvel Architects, will be 319 feet tall and include 350,000 square feet of mixed-use space. Features of the project include:

- *A New Brooklyn Heights Library*: The new, 21,000 square foot library will be one of the largest in the BPL system. The branch will be a destination library for northwest Brooklyn, offering new collections, technology, and extensive programs. The design will incorporate feedback from the community, and planned features include expanded youth program areas, quiet space for independent study, and a large community program room.

- *Uninterrupted Library Service for the Brooklyn Heights Community*: An 8,000 square foot interim library space will be provided by Hudson Companies, at Our Lady of Lebanon Church (113 Remsen Street), five blocks from the existing branch.

- ***Affordable Housing***: 114 units of offsite affordable housing built within the community (CB2). The units will come online concurrent with the opening of 280 Cadman Plaza West.

In a long-planned move, the Business and Career Library, currently housed in the Brooklyn Heights branch, will move to the Central Library, a more central location where job seekers and entrepreneurs from across the borough will enjoy the expanded hours, interdisciplinary resources, and modern work and study spaces that the Central Library provides. Of the 28,000 square feet in the current branch that are accesible to the public, approximately 13,000 are devoted to the B&C Library and 15,000 to the branch library.

During the RFP process, BPL convened a Community Advisory Committee, which met to advise the Library on priorities regarding redevelopment of the site. The Committee's feedback directly impacted the parameters of the project detailed in the RFP, increasing the size of the proposed library, dictating key design elements and prioritizing interim space to ensure uninterrupted library service.

BPL will lead a community-driven design process for the new Brooklyn Heights branch, and the next Community Advisory Committee meeting will be held on October 7th. The land-use review process (ULURP) is expected to begin later this year, and will give the public an opportunity for further input. Construction is expected to begin in 2016.

For more information on the project, including initial renderings of the new facility visit http://www.bklynlibrary.org/brooklyn-heights-project.