

Commentary/Op-Ed - December 2015

Why I support the plan to redevelop the Brooklyn Heights Library

Despite the essential services the city's public libraries provide to residents across NYC, their physical infrastructure is in trouble. In this *City & State* op-ed, CUF Executive Director Jonathan Bowles highlights the Brooklyn Public Library's innovative approach to addressing its crumbling infrastructure.

by Jonathan Bowles

In this *City & State* op-ed, CUF Executive Director Jonathan Bowles focuses in on the continued underinvestment and deferred maintenance in the city's 207 public library branches. Their crumbling infrastructure, he argues, frequently hinders the libraries' ability to provide essential services to New Yorkers throughout all five boroughs.

For this reason, Brooklyn Public Library's plan to redevelop its Brooklyn Heights Library stands out as an innovative way to increase funding for the borough's entire library system. The redevelopment achieves (and pays for) the complete renovation of the Brooklyn Heights Library as part of a much denser residential development. Not only will Brooklyn Heights receive a brand new library—reconfigured and newly furnished to better suit the needs of the community—but the sale of the land will supply the library system with millions of dollars to spend on the deferred maintenance costs of libraries across the borough. As advocates, library supporters and policymakers wrestle with how to increase public investment in libraries, this deal is smart, and will do much to address the immediate infrastructure needs of Brooklyn's library branches.

Click here to read the full op-ed.



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