



Contact:  
Suzanne M. Thinnes  
Communications Manager  
4400 Forbes Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
412.578.2458 (office)  
412.983.9409 (cell)

## For Immediate Release

### **Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh seeks short-term increase from Allegheny Regional Asset District to keep locations, hours, programs and services in 2011** *Library needs \$1.724 million while it seeks a long-term funding solution.*

**(Pittsburgh, PA – July 19, 2010)** In a letter to the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD), Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh officials submitted a 2011 operating budget request of \$19,324,700. The Library's budget request represents a 9.8% increase over 2010 to enable it to maintain library hours, locations, programs and services to the Pittsburgh region while it continues to seek long-term funding. At its current funding level the Library is projecting a \$1.724 million deficit for 2011.

“Given the status of various efforts to secure long-term funding, we view 2011 as another year requiring stop-gap funding until a long-term funding solution can be agreed upon and implemented,” said Dr. Barbara K. Mistick, president and director of Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. “We are exploring every option we can to avoid significant reductions in public service to our library customers, and consequently, we feel we must continue to advocate and seek increased funding from local revenue sources.”

Without dedicated long-term sustainable funding, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh projects a \$4.4 million shortfall in operating funds by 2014. “In the absence of any other substantial influx of funding for 2011, we are turning to RAD as our primary local funding source to consider increasing support to Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh until additional long-term funding can be secured,” Mistick said.

Even with this requested increase, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's 2011 budget submission permits the Library to perform only the basic public services in terms of library hours, programming, new materials, and staffing. The Library continues to explore all ways to cut expenses and increase revenues. Yet, the cost of running even a basic Library system with no enhancements continues to rise.

The Library has been actively engaged in a number of efforts to improve its financial outlook. A 10-member Public Private Task Force on Sustainable Funding has been working to identify ideas and funding opportunities while a three-part Community Engagement Process is working in tandem to inform the Library staff and trustees about the priorities of the community. The Task Force has researched and discussed many ideas including voluntary contributions, increased revenue from existing sources and the creation of new public revenue streams. They are currently assessing the feasibility of each option by considering revenue potential, time necessary to implement, political implications, likelihood of public support and conditions under which funds could be used. Funding recommendations are expected in the fall with a goal of implementing in time for the 2012 budget.

In the fall of 2009, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh officials announced an Action Plan, which included increases in fines, fees and fundraising; reductions in library services and staffing as well as branch consolidations, relocations and closures. In 2010, the City of Pittsburgh committed stop-gap funding, which enabled the Library to defer branch closures and relocations for one year.

Early in 2010, the State passed SB711, which dedicated funding for libraries from the 1% local share of table gaming revenues provided that the existing number of branches in the Carnegie Library of

Pittsburgh system remains the same. The Library's Board of Trustees will track table gaming revenues generated in 2010 to obtain a reliable estimate for 2011 and review the deferred Action Plan to determine whether and when the Library will be able to access these dollars.

Offsetting these positives, the State recently announced additional cuts to library funding totaling 8.4%. This reduction is a loss of approximately \$600,000 to CLP's 2011 budget, including the reductions to State Aid as well as reductions to the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Coupled with last year's 30% reduction, the Library has lost approximately \$2 million in state funding since 2009.

In addition to operating dollars, the Library's 2011 budget submission to RAD included a request in the amount of \$2,600,560 for the Electronic Information Network (eiNetwork), which oversees the catalog and electronic needs of more than 70 public libraries in Allegheny County. The Library became the fiscal agent for the eiNetwork in 2009 and requests to continue in that capacity.

The Library's RAD Budget Submission for 2011 is posted on its Web site [www.carnegielibrary.org](http://www.carnegielibrary.org).

###

### **About Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh**

*Engaging our Community in Literacy and Learning*

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh contributes to the educational attainment, economic development, and cultural enrichment of the region. Through critical services such as early learning programs for children, job search assistance and computer and Internet access, the Library fosters lifelong learning and is a renowned leader among the nation's libraries. With more than 2 million visitors and 3.5 million items borrowed each year, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh is the region's most visited asset and one of the largest public libraries in Pennsylvania. Established in 1895 by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie as a public trust to be funded by the community, the Library derives approximately 90% of its annual operating budget from public or government sources, including the Allegheny County Regional Asset District (RAD), the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the City of Pittsburgh.