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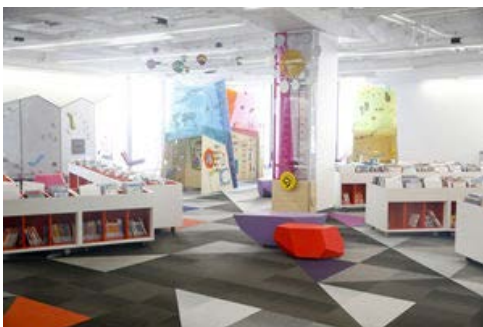
Tulsa's Central Library cuts ribbon on Saturday

■ Planning and renovations took five years, cost \$55 million

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Posted: Saturday, October 1, 2016 12:00 am | Updated: 3:40 pm, Mon Oct 3, 2016.

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The renovated Tulsa Central Library offers a children's section with play stations and more. IAN MAULE/Tulsa World



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The doors will open Saturday to the newly renovated, \$55 million Central Library for a day of tours, fun and information.

Construction took about three years to complete and five years in total for planning. A ribbon-cutting will be held at 10 a.m. with the facility opening at 11 a.m.

It was funded with about \$25 million from public funds, and the rest was raised in a campaign led by former Mayor Robert LaFortune.

The impetus for the overhaul was a need to replace the 50-year-old building's infrastructure of heat and air, electrical, and plumbing. The systems were consistently breaking down, and replacement parts were no longer available.

For more than a decade, Tulsa residents struggled with whether to replace the library

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Central Library events Saturday

Children's activities

11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.: Photo booth, face painting, ballon animals, magician

Noon: Storytime and maker space tour

12:30-3 p.m.: Airplane Fly-off, storytime, maker space demonstrations

Teen and adult

11 am.-5 p.m.: Make a comic
3 p.m.: Hands-on digital literacy

All ages

11 a.m.-4 p.m.: Adult Literacy Information, iPad bar demonstration, collaboration/communication games, digital literacy lab

or renovate. In 2004, voters rejected a bond issue that would have built a new library in a different location.

When Chief Executive Officer Gary Shaffer was hired in January 2011, it was decided the Central Library would remain at the Fifth Street and Denver Avenue location, adding to the revitalization efforts downtown.

The infrastructure is now made of energy-efficient systems, such as solar panels, chilled-beam cooling and rainwater collection for irrigating landscape.

Patrons will see modern designs, updated technology and new spaces intended to meet the changing needs of patrons.

Among the highlights:

- A children's area filled with play stations and book bins for easy access

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- Study cubicles overlooking downtown
- Maker station for 3-D printing, soldering and digital recording lab
- Educator-intended meeting space with a kitchenette, movable furniture and magnetic board
- Pickup lockers for materials in the lobby for patrons to retrieve items when the facility is closed
- Expanded auditorium
- Various types of seating throughout the facility
- Expanded research and periodicals area
- Garden space between the library and parking garage for events
- Parking garage for 143 spaces, with lower cost for library patrons

Architects are the Minneapolis-based firm MSR Design (Meyer Scherer & Rockcastle) and the local firm of Crafton Tull.

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