

# POCOMOKE CITY, MARYLAND

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## STATEMENT FROM THE MAYOR AND POCOMOKE CITY COUNCIL REGARDING THE SELECTED SITE FOR THE NEW LIBRARY

Last week, the Worcester County Commissioner's, at the request of the Library Board of Trustees, unanimously voted to relocate the site of the new library from the former armory to the current library location. The decision to relocate the project was not at the request of the Mayor and Pocomoke City Council.

Over the past year, Pocomoke City provided input to the Library Board of Trustees regarding the site location. Acting under the belief the armory site was both the preferred and selected site, the City of Pocomoke expanded considerable resources to acquire dilapidated structures on the block where the armory is located. Through acquiring these properties, the City now owns the entire block. The sole purpose of acquiring these properties was for the location of the new library. With the relocation of the library from the armory site, the City now needs to remediate these dilapidated structures. Therefore, the City will request that the Worcester County Commissioners remove the hold on the previously approved loan so that the demolition of these unsafe structures can occur.

Unfortunately, the City must request the loan. Previously, the City applied for grants for the demolition, but was denied. The City cannot self-fund the demolition project. Further, the City cannot sell the armory property. When the State deeded the property to the City, a standard clause, known as a reverter, was included. The clause requires the City to return the property to the State if the property is not held for a public purpose. The State agreed to release the reverter and allow the City to transfer the deed to Worcester County upon the completion of the new library. However, as a result of the library project relocation, the City cannot sell or transfer the property to Worcester County or a private entity.

The Mayor and City Council look forward to the removal of the dilapidated structures and working with the Worcester County Commissioners to find a new public purpose for the armory property in the near future.