

City of Milwaukee: Municipal Research Center grand opening

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Combines three centers in City Hall Complex

The Municipal Research Center (MRC) will be unveiled tomorrow (Thursday) afternoon in an open house to celebrate its grand opening. The MRC is located in the basement level of the Frank P. Zeidler Municipal Building in a space that recently underwent a major renovation to facilitate the consolidation of three separate sections: the City Records Center, Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) staff offices, and Municipal Research Library (formerly the Legislative Reference Bureau Library).

With the City Hall foundation restoration project, there was a need to permanently relocate the Municipal Research Library and HPC office out of the City Hall basement level. Deputy City Clerk Richard Pfaff says the consolidation of the three sections into one division under the City Clerk's Office provides an opportunity to centralize and streamline access to and management of City records and documents, both those in active use and those with long-term administrative or historic value. "We looked at the challenges of relocation and consolidation as a great opportunity to instead improve employee and public accessibility to and awareness of the collections, information and services provided by the sections. The vision for the MRC is to be a place where the City's history goes to live. "

Records Manager Brad Houston says the new MRC has the proper accommodations for the documents, some which date back to the 1800s, and is open to the public. "We have trained professional staff to assist with your research," he said, adding that although the facility is not designed for browsing, staff is available to help locate the specific information one is seeking.

Library Manager Eileen Lipinski says that the formal opening of the MRC is only the beginning. "We are in the process of exploring strategies for organizing and

promoting historical and contemporary records with high potential public interest, and to provide training on working with archival records. The MRC will serve in a unique role as an information resource.”

The merger was made possible by the efforts of Common Council President Ashanti Hamilton to realign the City Records Center under the City Clerk’s Office, and through actions of the Common Council and Mayor Tom Barrett to provide support for the reimagined MRC project and funding for its creation.

- **What: Municipal Research Center Grand Opening**
- **Where: Zeidler Municipal Building, 841 N. Broadway, B-1 & B-2 (Basement level)**
- **When: Thursday, November 8 from 1 to 4 p.m.**

More information about the MRC can be found on our podcast at <https://youtu.be/5bfgaEcx4og> .