

Issue Brief:

Washington State Heritage Building (Supplemental Capital Budget)



A new Washington State Heritage Building proposed by the Office of the Secretary of State will bring together the Washington State Library and the Washington State Archives into one easily accessible location on the Capitol Campus.

The new building will house and display many of the state's unique, historical, and legal records in a secure, environmentally controlled and customer friendly environment. It will include space for rotating displays, exhibits, and public events sponsored by the State Library and State Archives, as well as the State Capital Museum.

The State Library has been housed in a Tumwater office building since 2001, when it was relocated from the Capitol Campus that had been its home since Territorial days. The State Archives is in a cramped facility originally designed for another purpose. Public accessibility to both is limited and there is inadequate space to display items of historical interest.

Co-locating the staffing of both divisions of the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) into one facility will provide improved access for the public and researchers whose needs often overlap the collections of the two divisions. It will also return the State Library to the Capitol Campus that was its home from Territorial days until it was relocated to a Tumwater office building in 2001.

The 2007 Legislature approved project funding through authorization of additional document filing fees at the state and county level. In 2008, the Legislature will be asked to approve two additional pre-design engineering activities.

The Washington Library Association strongly supports the Washington State Heritage Center project and encourages Legislative approval of ongoing pre-design funding during the 2008 and future sessions.