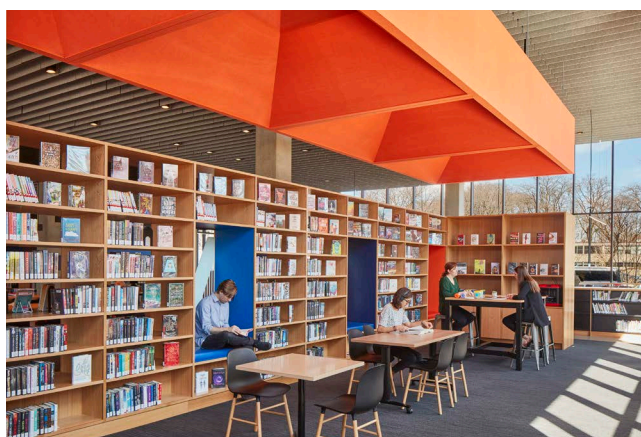


CO-LOCATED LIBRARIES

CITY AREA	Northwest and West Sides
NEIGHBORHOOD	West Ridge, Irving Park, Little Italy
DEVELOPER	Chicago Public Library, Chicago Housing Authority, Related Midwest, Evergreen Real Estate Group
ARCHITECT	Perkins + Will, John Ronan Architects, SOM
PROJECT TYPE	Institutional, Residential
PROJECT STATUS	Completed, early 2019

Three innovative affordable housing projects co-located with branch libraries opened across Chicago in early 2019: Taylor Street Apartments and the Roosevelt Branch Library on the Near West Side, designed by SOM; Independence Apartments and Independence Branch in Irving Park, by John Ronan Architects; and Northtown Apartments and Northtown Branch in West Ridge, by Ralph Johnson of Perkins + Will. Breaking from design convention, each represents a beacon and an anchor for its neighborhood, connecting vulnerable populations to a valued resource. In total, 161 apartments link to the three libraries. All but seven units offer heavily subsidized rents with an emphasis on senior housing.

A number of cities have toyed with this so-called [co-location model](#), developed through public-private partnership, but Chicago was the first to tout the pilot as advancing a future for public housing married to community resources and progressive design. Critics have lined up [in praise](#) of all three projects' expressive designs, and the City's willingness to spend up front in order to ensure the long-term viability of the buildings and instill pride among residents. In terms of solving the massive citywide—and nationwide—shortfall in affordable housing, it is a drop in the bucket. Still, cities like New York and Los Angeles have taken note.



Taylor Street Library and Apartments.
Photos by Tom Harris, courtesy of SOM

Further reading:

[Chicago finds a way to improve public housing: libraries.](#) Michael Kimmelman, New York Times, May 15, 2019.

[Cities are tackling the housing crunch by building above the library.](#) Kathleen McCormick, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, September 27, 2019.

[Chicago shows how public housing and libraries can coexist.](#) Blair Kamin, Chicago Tribune, August 22, 2019.

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