



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, November 25, 2003

Study Session

Item -5

Discussion Concerning the Library Expansion

Library Board president Joe Cook and Library Director Steve Fosselman will be presenting an annual Future Community Library Requirements update at this study session. This report will cover past planning and community studies for an expanded facility in effect since 1997; descriptions of past and present uses of the current facility as well as future needs that can be addressed through a planned expansion; and broad planning considerations necessary at this time to move this project ahead.

Staff Contact: Steve Fosselman



Public Library
**INTEROFFICE
MEMORANDUM**

*Working Together for a
Better Tomorrow. Today.*

DATE: November 21, 2003

TO: Mayor, City Council, City Administrator

FROM: Grand Island Public Library Board of Trustees

RE: Future Community Library Requirements

In the past we have provided periodic reports to the Mayor, City Council and City Administrator on our building plans in anticipation of an expansion project. The following update is provided for the city's planning purposes, and serves as an outline for our presentation at your November 25, 2003 Council Study Session. Additional updates will follow as necessary to keep you as aware as possible of the library's building needs.

This report is divided into two sections, one to indicate past planning efforts and the other section to describe the Library Board's current planning decisions in light of changing conditions.

I. Past Planning

Even before building expansion planning ever materialized, the Library was continually working on improving its programs, services and materials. As a result, through continued City budget support, a very dedicated staff and greatly appreciative public, various dramatic increases have been seen in our services since 1990-1991.¹

The idea of a building expansion has been in the planning stages since 1997, when the Library Board convened a citizen committee to make major changes to its Strategic Plan in conjunction with the Heartland Vision Process. Through both planning initiatives, improvements in services and additional space for our Library were identified as future community needs, and this document was presented to the City Council.

Annual Library strategic plans since 1997 have concentrated on this planning need, with major progress in 1999 and 2000 in a variety of planning studies:

1) Midwest Survey and Research – This firm conducted a community survey of library use and future library needs. This report was shared with the City Council in February 2000. Of greatest importance to us in planning for the future were findings that additional emphasis on various services was deemed important to Hall County residents.²

2) Economic Development Corporation's Community Sales Tax Survey – In February 2000 these findings were also released to the City Council, in which expanding the Library received the second highest favorable rating among city government projects (behind Police services).

3) Library Space Needs and Alternatives Study - Consulting Librarian David R. Smith was commissioned to produce this report. Mr. Smith benefited greatly from the Midwest Survey and Research report of future service needs as well as focus group research, and his resulting report more specifically identified the areas of expansion needed and was presented to the City Council in March 2000. Basically, the report specified an expansion of 20,000 square feet immediately (45,000 square foot total).³

4) RDG Joint City-County Long Range Facilities Study – this report was done at the same time and included the Library. Their June 2000 square footage analysis concluded that to meet future public service and staffing needs, our facility required 48,288 square feet in 2000 and 48,978 square feet by 2005.

5) Feasibility Committee/Architect – a citizen committee was formed by the Library Board soon after the publication of the Smith report. Its charge was to determine if expansion to our current facility was possible and to participate in the selection of an architect to conduct a Phase I study of that feasibility. As a result, Clark Enersen Partners was approved by the City Council in September 2000 and our initial expansion/remodel plan was presented at a Council meeting in February 2001.

Subsequent City Council goal setting sessions and Capital Projects schedules have slated this project for 2006-2007, which necessitated a short-term renovation in 2001 – 2002 to create a computer lab and study room in the Reference Section, improve our meeting room capabilities, and various minor improvements to make the best use of current library facilities.

At this time last year, an update to the Mayor, Council and City Administrator noted that by 2006 – 2007 about seven years will have gone by since the Smith study, and that the Library Board would be re-examining its findings in order to provide the public with the best possible facilities and services for our community. Board meetings since then have provided the basis for the rest of this report, and Library Director Steve Fosselman has prepared a Powerpoint presentation for the November 25th Study Session, showing past and present uses of the current facility as well as the library's future needs in an expanded facility.

II. Current Planning Decisions

1) One Time Expansion to 50,000 square feet - With the passage of time, it is our recommendation that instead of expanding twice, once to 45,000 square feet and then to 54,000 square feet by 2020 (as indicated in the David Smith report), we expand only once in 2006 – 2007 to 50,000 square feet. This would provide a core service facility that should be sufficient to meet our needs for at least 20 years.

An expansion beyond our original 45,000 square feet estimate was indicated also in the 2000 RDG City-County Long Range Facilities Study of our facility conducted in June 2000. A 50,000 square foot facility in 2006 –2007 is in line with these findings as well as all of our strategic planning to date to provide the community with an adequately designed core services facility.

It is important to note that to accommodate the additional square footage for the building as well as the extra required parking spaces, the original 1 ½ block space designed for our project in 2000 will no longer be feasible for our needs, and we are studying how best to solve this problem and still maintain our current location.

2) Safety Considerations - Previous planning efforts didn't fully explore how to make an expansion of our current facility as safe as possible given the traffic and accident increases in this area over the past few years. At this time, the following safety considerations that are based on the Regional Planning Commission's 2003 Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Public Safety/Public Facilities/Utilities Subcommittee) need to be placed into our overall planning:

- Second Street widening to accommodate a turning lane, already being planned by Public Works

- Pedestrian crossing at Second and Lincoln Streets, also being planned
- Closure of Washington Street to protect our patrons walking back and forth between the parking lot and the library
- Third Street widening to accommodate a turning lane. Patrons have experienced long waits and safety concerns entering and exiting our Third Street parking lot entrance.
- For the safety of our patrons, expansion beyond the 1 ½ blocks originally designed for our project will permit more landscaping to act as a buffer in this increasingly busy section of Grand Island.

3) Branch Library Facility - Demographic trends for this community have changed with the release of the 2000 census figures. It is important that we move the subject of a future branch facility off of the pages of the consultant's study into our strategic planning for the future, in order to determine the feasibility of obtaining a small branch library in Northwest Grand Island, possibly in conjunction with the School District of Grand Island.

4) Cost Projections - Whether an additional 5,000 square feet is designed or not, it has been necessary to update our original cost estimates. Our architect, Clark Enersen Partners, had originally estimated our costs (assuming a Summer 2001 bidding process) at \$5,045,000 for a 20,000 square foot expansion or \$7,040,000 for a new 45,000 square foot building. Last year at this time our architect supplied us with a new cost estimate totaling \$7,300,000 which is now reflected in the City's Capital Projects budget for 2006-2007. ⁴

5) Funding Considerations - The following has been informally discussed by the Mayor, Council, City Administrator, and Library Board, but it is important at this time to more formally set a direction for funding in order to accomplish this project:

- Federal, state and private foundation grants available for library renovation projects – this is a necessary component that should never be overlooked but isn't expected to be a major part of this project.
- Fundraising efforts by the Grand Island Public Library Foundation, Inc. – again, a necessary component, especially in library circles, but again, not expected to be a major part of this project.
- Allocation of City funding sources – This is still expected to be the most substantial means of completing this project.

Appendix – Future Community Library Requirements Report – November 21, 2003

¹ Various increases in services since 1990-1991:

- Checkouts – 74%
- Patrons Visiting Library – 79%
- Reference Questions – 423%
- Hours of Service – 22%
- Summer Reading Program Participants – 134%
- Library Programs – 332%
- Holds Placed – 847%
- Meeting Room Use – 204%
- Bookmobile Stops – 196%

² From Midwest Marketing and Research Community Study of Library:

- Helping children and youth develop an interest in reading and learning.
- Helping people learn to read who cannot read.
- Providing library assistance and information services in a timely manner.
- Providing research assistance for students.
- Providing preschool reading programs.
- Training people to access information using new technology.
- Providing at-home reading services for senior citizens and people who are homebound.
- The Bookmobile.
- Providing effective parenting information and programs.

³ From Smith Report:

- The existing building was very well planned and designed which has prevented the space and functional problems from emerging sooner. Many resources and services, such as computers, were not on the library's horizon in the 1970's.
- There is some congestion in the building, including at service desks, in public seating and in some shelving ranges. Staff work areas are also particularly deficient in size and adequacy.
- Under current building conditions, the library is becoming less able to provide an adequate level of service now and in the future or to implement completely new services and technology.
- The current library is inadequate in overall size to serve current population needs. Some services and functional areas have already been severely compressed in attempts to maintain levels of service and usage. An expanded or new facility must have adequate size both to allow "decompression" of these areas and to provide space over at least a 20 year period for natural growth of services and for changing needs.
- The Grand Island Public Library is highly regarded by the general population due to the quality of library services which is being provided even with the growing limitations of the building.
- That the desirable minimum library square foot objective be established at 45,000 square feet based on the initial library space needs assessment and the anticipated library service area population.
- That the present library be expanded by 20,000 square feet or replaced with a single, centrally located library of 45,000 with on-site parking available for at least 135 cars.
- The expanded or new library should be further expandable by at least 9,000 square feet (20%) with eventual parking for at least 162 cars.
- Any branch library development should not be considered until a larger library has been provided and then not before 2020.

⁴ New Cost Projections by Clark Enersen Partners (2002):

- Based upon a 4% inflation increase, per year, with an additional 5,000 SF (for a total facility of 50,000 SF) built in 2006-2007, the total project cost would be around \$7,000,000. This assumes that the affected site area is approximately the same size and utility improvements outside of the building would be in addition to this amount. Also, it would not include site acquisition costs.
- That cost would compare to a total project cost of approximately \$9,500,000 for a new facility of 50,000 square feet. Also, for comparison, if the additional 5,000 square feet were not added, the total project cost of the addition and remodeling of the existing facility would be approximately \$6,100,000.