

THE MASTER FACILITIES PLAN

“A library is not simply a repository of books, it is the symbol and center of our culture ... a door and a window for those who might not otherwise have such doors and windows.” Amy Tan, author¹

This study of the total public library needs of Louisville including the Main Library, all branch libraries, and outreach services was initiated with the release on December 6, 2001 of the Request For Proposal (RFP). The Louisville Free Public Library was seeking to develop a Master Facilities Plan designed to enhance public library service throughout all of Louisville.

This study recommendations will assist the Library in meeting the challenge of how to best serve the nearly 700,000 residents of Louisville. It will provide a framework for each community within the City, enabling the Library to develop in more detail a program of service tailored to meet specific library services and facility needs.

The Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives' Minimum Standards for Public Library Adequacy reveal that the Library is quite deficient in two major categories -- books per capita and building square footage per capita. Failure to correct these deficiencies will seriously hamper the Library's ability to secure state construction funds.

¹ *footnotes*, the newsletter of the Friends of the Park Forest Public Library, Summer 2002.

The Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives has published *Minimum Standards for Public Library Adequacy*. These new standards, when analyzed, reveal that the Library is quite deficient in two of the major categories -- books per capita and building square footage per capita. It is most important that these deficiencies be corrected inasmuch as failure to do so would seriously hamper the Library's ability to secure state construction funds. The users of the Louisville Free Public Library will be the primary beneficiaries of the improvements via larger collections, additional space for technology, programming, and the like.

STUDY SPECIFICS

The consultants, *PROVIDENCE Associates Inc*, were charged with the following study specifics:

- Describe in detail the facilities development alternatives that will support the service goals, meet Commonwealth standards, and provide for growth for the next 20 years in the branch libraries and the Main Library
- Involve the public in evaluating the alternatives, including a branch and Main Library charettes
- Develop a comparative report of public library capital development programs in a peer group of cities in the country
- Develop a formal *Master Facilities Plan* for adoption by the Library Advisory Commission, a plan that guides the development of facilities and informs the public, elected officials, library supporters, and the staff

STUDY TEAM

PROVIDENCE Associates Inc, Library Planners Consultants, based in Cottonwood, Arizona, was the principal consultant for this study. Working with *PROVIDENCE* were the following team of experienced and talented consultants:

- Lockett&Farley, a Louisville-based full-service architectural and engineering company
- *PROVIDENCE Architecture*, a small Dallas design firm with a specialty in library layout and design
- Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants, husband-wife consultants who work out of Milton, Wisconsin
- LMA Techwork from Rockford, Illinois with an emphasis on information technology planning
- Samuel E. Morrison, the director of the Broward County Library, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Richard L. Waters was the principal study consultant for *PROVIDENCE Associates Inc*.

The team was most ably assisted throughout the process by the staff of the Louisville Free Public Library, including Craig Buthod, library director, Mary Frances Cooper, assistant director for public services and study project director, and Nancye Browning, supervisor of branch libraries. Also assisting the consultants were Jean Varble, assistant director for operations and Charles Harris, head of the Main Library.

STUDY ACTIVITIES

The PROVIDENCE *Associates Inc* consulting team, during the course of this study:

*The future belongs to those
who plan for it!*

- Conducted 29 focus groups with residents of Louisville and staff of the Library
- Interviewed 19 key leaders from throughout Greater Louisville
- Analyzed the results of a web survey completed by over 400 residents of Greater Louisville
- Prepared an analysis of 15 peer libraries
- Reviewed the results of a telephone survey conducted August 2001 by the Urban Studies Institute, University of Louisville
- Held two design charettes for the public and staff, one for branch libraries and one for the Main Library
- Prepared a Preliminary Draft report
- Conducted five public and one staff "Town Hall" meetings to review and receive comments concerning the Preliminary Draft.

The results of these activities have culminated in this final report and recommendations.

The future belongs to those who plan for it!