

THE RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section the consultants present their recommendations. We also provide a brief discussion of the existing conditions of the 17 facilities that presently comprise the Louisville Free Public Library system. We begin our discussion with the branch libraries.

BRANCH LIBRARIES

There are now 16 branch library facilities. Until recently, the branch libraries were administratively organized into three groupings:

- Regional Libraries - The two largest facilities, Southwest and Bon Air.
- Area Libraries - Seven of the mid-sized facilities
- Community Libraries - The seven smallest branch libraries.

Collectively, the 16 buildings total 141,525 square feet (SF) of space, serving an estimated population of 638,260 (the branch libraries only).

The space per capita equals 0.18. The current standards established by the Commonwealth require 0.60 SF of space per capita. The deficiency is therefore 0.42 SF per capita, or over 230 percent.

The current branch libraries range in size from 2,747 SF (Shively-Newman) to 17,973 SF (Southwest). The average size is 8,845 SF.

The newest branch library facility, the Fern Creek Branch Library, located in a strip shopping center in southeast Louisville, opened in 1999. However, the LFPL has opened a Teen Center facility, adjacent to the Highlands-Shelby Park Branch Library, within the past several months. For purposes of this report, the Teen Center is treated as part of the Highlands-Shelby Park Branch Library.

The oldest facility, the Western Branch Library, located less than one mile from the downtown Main Library, opened in 1905.

Branch Library Buildings Not Designed as Libraries

Only eight of the 16 buildings were designed and built as public library facilities. These include three Carnegie era libraries--Crescent Hill, Portland, and Western -- the two WPA era facilities -- Iroquois and Shawnee, and the newer Bon Air, Jeffersontown, and Okolona branch libraries. Eight of the libraries are in leased space. The Library pays rent on three of the buildings -- Fern Creek, Highlands-Shelby Park, and Southwest. The annual lease payments are \$360,000.

The buildings now in use have a most interesting background. The buildings -- in their "former life" -- have been, or are:

- Bowling alley (Middletown)
- City halls (Shively-Newman and St. Matthews-Eline)
- Playtorium (Fairdale)
- School library (Westport)
- Strip shopping spaces (Fern Creek, Highlands-Shelby Park, and Southwest).

Branch Library Collection Sizes

The 16 branch libraries house collections that now total 785,209 items. In addition, each branch library has current periodicals and selected "runs" of backfile periodicals. The collection sizes range from 23,400 to 98,800 (exclusive of the periodicals).

The collections per capita for the branch library population equate to 1.23 items per capita. The standards of the Commonwealth require 2.50 items per capita. Therefore, the LFPL is 1.27 items per capita deficient, a percentage deficiency of 103 percent.¹

Usage of the Branch Libraries

The collections are being used, more and more each year. Between 1999 and 2002 the branch library circulation increased over 201,000 -- a percentage gain of 7.2 percent over the four year period. Other usage indicators include over the same span of time include:

- Door count - a gain of just under eight percent, to a total of 2.36 million
- Information requests - a huge jump of 27.9 percent, for a 2002 total of just under one million.

For additional information regarding the present buildings and their conditions, please refer to the study completed last year by the consultants, *Long-Range Facilities Plan*, as well as detailed engineering and architectural analysis of each building performed by Lockett&Farley.

¹ The Commonwealth standards do not include current or backfile periodicals as counting toward meeting the 2.5 items per capita requirement.

Branch Library Recommendations

The consultants are recommending that the greater Louisville area be organized into six geographic clusters for library planning purposes. These six areas are estimated to have a population in 2007 of 642,742. This is a slight increase over 2002 of .07 percent. For purposes of determining per capita sizes and collections, the consultants are using the 2007 figure. See the appendices for a set of service area maps for each of the existing branch libraries and a description of the projected populations and demographics.

The proposed clusters and existing libraries within each are as follows:

- Eastern - Jeffersontown, Middletown, and Westport
- Northeastern - Bon Air, Crescent Hill, Highlands-Shelby Park, and St. Matthews-Eline
- Northwestern - Portland, Shawnee, and Western
- Southeastern - Fern Creek and Okolona
- Southwestern - Fairdale and Southwest
- West Central - Iroquois and Shively-Newman.

A set of maps illustrate each cluster (see the appendices).

The consultants have developed two options for consideration. A series of spreadsheets were developed for each option. The spreadsheets detail the recommended staffing, collections, customer seating, and support elements for each proposed facility. The spreadsheets are also included in the appendices.

Option 1

Eastern Cluster - 2002 estimated population is 115,367, the 2007 projected population is 120,496.

Jeffersontown - Expands into the Museum space, resulting in total library space of 14,000 SF. The added space would provide for more customer seating and public access computers. This change will *not* meet the long-term needs of the Jeffersontown service area.

Middletown - A new facility on a new site, resulting in an increase in the collections of 41 percent, plus considerably more seating and technological capabilities.

Westport - This branch library, now located in the school library of the same name, would be replaced with a new regional library of 40,000 SF (see floor plan example on the next page). The regional library will house a collection of 176,000 items as compared to Westport's present collection of 34,710.

For this cluster the amount of library space per capita will be 0.64, a gain of 202.9 percent over existing conditions. There will be 2.81 collection items per capita, an increase of 90.0 percent.

Northeastern Cluster - 2002 estimated population is 196,090, the figure for 2007 is estimated to be 197,502.

Bon Air - This building was expanded and renovated in 1994. The site is unable to accommodate more space. The parking is grossly deficient, so the major thrust of this project is to acquire property for additional parking, plus an expanded entrance, and some modest interior upgrades.

Crescent Hill - This historic Carnegie Library has been expanded twice (1962 and 1994, when it was also renovated). The recommendation now is for a third expansion to provide about 4,800 SF of additional space and parking exclusively for the branch library, plus some modest interior upgrades to the existing space. Adjacent properties will need to be acquired even though there is a sizeable side yard (adequate for the additional space, but not for the needed parking).

Highlands-Shelby Park - We are recommending a new facility, ideally to be located on land that is now part of the parking for the strip shopping center. The new facility will allow for collection growth, added customer seating, and more information technology capabilities.

St. Matthews-Eline - A new facility is also needed here, to replace the grossly undersized and overcrowded facility that shares space with municipal offices and a gymnasium. The recommended size, 28, 400 SF, will enable the collections to nearly double, plus provide other spaces now not available, e.g. meeting rooms, group study spaces, and the like. A new site will be needed, of course. The new facility should also solve existing parking problems.

This cluster will have 0.39 SF per capita of library space, a gain of 56.1 percent, and 1.68 collection items per capita, a gain of 21.0 percent.

Northwestern Cluster - This inner city cluster will probably experience a slight decline in population between 2002 and 2007, a loss of 1.72 percent (from 41,576 to 40,861).

Portland - An expansion and total renovation of this Carnegie era facility is recommended, plus on-site parking (there are now only two spaces, and neither is available to the public). The branch library will almost double in size, and the collection growth will be approximately 82.5 percent.

Shawnee - This branch library is recommended to be replaced with an all-new facility on a new site (but in the immediate neighborhood). At a recommended size of 11,700 SF, there will be an increase of just less than 4,700 SF (with, ideally, all space on one level).

Western - This historic building was renovated in 1985 and again in 1994 (main level only). Our recommendations for this project are to expand the building by 8,300 SF, renovate the lower level, and provide on-site parking (only street parking is now available). Such a project will enable the building to continue to

function as both the center for African-American collections with the LFPL and be the branch library for the immediate neighborhood.

When all projects are completed the Northwestern Cluster will experience a 94.5 percent increase in library space per capita (to 0.90 SF). There will also be an increase of 54.2 percent in the collections, bringing the per capita figure to 2.77.

Southeastern Cluster - This suburban cluster is also expected to experience a slight decline in population, from 101,401 to 101,346 between 2002 and 2007 (a loss of 0.05 percent).

Fern Creek - A new facility, on a site to be determined, is recommended, thus eliminating the second of the three leased facilities for which the Library now pays an annual rent. The amount of library space will double, and there will be an increase in collections of 39.7 percent. The new branch library will have a multi-purpose meeting room, conference rooms, and storytime space for children's services among the other improvements over the current leased space.

Okolona - Here, the consultants are proposing a major expansion and modest upgrades to the existing building, plus additional parking. The expansion/renovation will be the second for this building, the last completed in 1997. The building, when completed, will have 18,700 SF of space and collection space for 80,100 items (an increase of over 24,000 items).

Newburg - The Newburg community has been promised a branch library, the consultants understand, for the past 40 years. The report recommends that that promise be kept and a new 8,000 SF library be planned, designed, constructed, furnished, equipped, and opened. The building should house just under 30,000 items, and include meeting rooms, technology, customer seating, and more. This will be the 17th branch library in the LFPL system.

This cluster will have 0.38 SF of library space per capita, a gain of 186.6 percent over current conditions. There will be an increase of 73.3 percent in library collections, resulting in 1.59 collection items per capita.

Southwestern Cluster - This area is also projected to have a slight drop in population, from 84,972 to 83,571 (a loss of 1.65 percent over the next five years).

Fairdale - A new facility is proposed, 8,000 SF, housing 29,050 collections.

Southwest - This leased space library is recommended for replacement with the second of three proposed new 40,000 SF regional libraries. Such action will mean that all three of the branch libraries that the LFPL now pays rent for will be eliminated. The collection size, etc. will be the same for this building as described above for the Eastern Cluster Regional Library.

Southwest Community - This is branch library, 12,470 SF in size, will be another all-new facility for the library system (number 18 in terms of branch libraries). The site has not been determined (see the above mentioned 2001 study for a set

of library site criteria). At the recommended size, the building will house 42,300 collection items.

Cluster totals include 0.72 SF per capita, a gain of 242.1 percent over existing conditions, and 2.97 collection items per capita, a gain of 186.6 percent.

West Central Cluster - This cluster will have an ever-so-slight gain in population between 2002 and 2007, from 98,855 to 98,966, or 0.11 percent.

Iroquois - The Iroquois, one of the two WPA era buildings, has a substantial amount of underused space in the lower level. The recommended improvements call for "punching" a hole in the upper level floor and connecting the two floors via an open staircase (an elevator was added last year). Other improvements include on-site parking and a second elevator and entrance on the building side where the proposed parking would be located. The gain in useable space will allow the collection to stay basically the same, plus provide space for a greatly expanded children's services area.

Shively-Newman - A much larger, new facility is needed to replace this very small and vastly crowded building that shares space with the municipal offices. The increase in space will be the largest percentage wise, over 500 percent. The collections will grow from 29,400 to nearly 88,000.

West/South Central - The third of the proposed three new regional library facilities will round out the buildings in this cluster. Its size, etc. are the same as described above in the first two regional library recommendations. It will be branch library number 19.

The West Central Cluster will have 0.74 SF of library space per capita, a gain of 308.2 percent over existing conditions. The collections will also increase by almost 269 percent, to 3.25 collection items per capita.

In summary for Option 1:

- All buildings designed and built as public libraries
- No lease payments
- Space per capita = 0.56 (in 2007)
- Collections per capita = 2.36 (in 2007).

The tables on pages 8.14 and 8.15 summarize the recommended building sizes as well as providing a summary description of each project. The tables also summarize the staffing, materials capacity, seating, PCs, and space by cluster. The tables are followed by a conceptual blocking plan and floor plan layout for both a typical regional library and a typical branch library. These planning tools were developed during the branch library design charette described in the previous chapter.

Option 2

For many of the libraries in the six clusters the Option 2 recommendations are the same as in Option 1. These similarities are noted. The population projections are, of course, the same, and are not repeated.

Eastern Cluster

Jeffersontown - An all-new facility is proposed. To be 22,320 SF in size, it will facilitate a growth in collections of about 28,000 items.

Middletown - Same as Option 1.

Westport - Same as Option 1.

The new and much larger Jeffersontown Branch Library will result in there being 0.70 SF of space per capita, a gain of 235.8 percent. Collection size will be 3.05 per capita, an increase of 106.7 percent.

Northeastern Cluster

Bon Air - Same as Option 1.

Crescent Hill - Same as Option 1.

Highlands-Shelby Park - The recommendation here is for the branch library to remain in its leased space, including the Teens Center, and add 1,500 SF of additional leased space, bringing the total to 11,070 SF.

St. Matthews-Eline - Same as Option 1.

In the Northeastern Cluster under Option 2 there would be 0.37 SF per capita of library space, a gain of 48.1 percent, and 1.61 collection items per capita, a gain of 15.6 percent.

Northwestern Cluster

Portland - Same as Option 1.

Shawnee - For this facility, Option 2 proposes an expansion and modest interior upgrades. The total amount of space would be the same as in Option 1, 11,700

square feet. However, because of there being two levels, the building's overall efficiency would be slightly less, thus the collection growth would be less. There will have to be additional land acquired, or else the present available parking will have to be turned into building space.

Western - Same as Option 1.

The space per capita is the same as for Option 1. However, the collection size is slightly less as a result of the smaller capabilities of Shawnee, 2.58 collection items per capita for a gain of 44.0 percent.

Southeastern, Southwestern, and West Central clusters are the same in as Option 1.

In summary for Option 2:

- All but one building designed and built as public libraries
- One lease payment
- Space per capita = 0.52 (in 2007)
- Collections per capita = 2.16 (in 2007).

The table on the page 7.20 summarizes the recommended building sizes and provides summary descriptions of each Option 2 project.

The capital cost estimates for all projects and the annual operational cost estimates for are presented in the next chapter.

Use of Other Carnegie Era Buildings

The consultants also considered the feasibility of utilizing one or more of the Carnegie era buildings that have not been in service for the past 20 – 30 years. While there is a certain appeal to these structures, their small size, multi-level design, and technological inefficiencies mitigate against their use now for modern public library service.

PROGRAMMATIC AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Whether Option 1 or Option 2 are implemented – or a combination of the two – the residents of Greater Louisville will realize major programmatic and service improvements in their branch libraries. Using current data and that developed in the aforementioned *Long-Range Facilities Plan*, the comparisons on the next page are noted.

<i>Programmatic/Service Element</i>	<i>Current Conditions</i>	<i>Option 1</i>	<i>Option 2</i>
Collections	785,209	1,338,900	1,344,650
Periodical Subscriptions	1,802	2,390	2,405
Customer Seats	946	1,498	1,503
Meeting Room Seats	1,302	2,208	2,249