
Kalkaska County Library New Building Project Phase II Amended Concept Document



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Kalkaska County Library

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Project Concept Document



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1. Mission Statement of the Kalkaska County Library

The mission of the Kalkaska County Library is to provide users with open access to technology, information, and ideas covering a broad spectrum of human thought and experience, and to foster the understanding and development of cultures, communities, and individuals.

The Library will strive to protect intellectual freedom, promote literacy, and encourage lifelong learning.

The Library will strive to maintain a diverse collection of materials, and provide access to educational, informational, and recreational resources, including materials outside its collection.

Our clear vision, strong values, and the way we execute our mission will make our Library one that our peers will want to emulate. As we seek to fulfill our mission, our efforts and resources will be directed towards making our vision a reality in the following ways:

- a. Our Library staff will set the standard for customer service among public libraries. Hallmarks of our staff will be professionalism, teamwork, collaboration, creativity, flexibility in responding to patron needs, and pride in our achievements.
- b. Our Board of Library Trustees will enthusiastically advocate for Library services in the community. The Board will be fully devoted to the mission, vision, and values of the Library. Our collections will be progressive and diverse in breadth and form.
- c. Our Library's physical and virtual spaces will respond to the changing needs of our users.
- d. Our patrons will be proud of their Library and consider it as the first and best source to meet their informational and recreational needs.

2. Document Purpose

The purpose of this document is to detail the concept for the Kalkaska County Library (KCL) to relocate to a new site that will meet the current and future needs of the 21st Century and its citizens, through technological advances intertwined with standard print and recorded materials. As technology progresses, the need for KCL to keep pace with society increases, requiring more room for technology and making it difficult to operate within the current small confined space.

In an effort to continue to provide the library services the community has grown to expect, a Strategic Planning Committee has been formed to address solutions to the deficiencies inherent to the current facility.

This document will continue where the Kalkaska County Library New Building Project Concept Document Phase II left off. In that document, the recommendation from the Strategic Planning Committee was to pursue a lease agreement with the Kalkaska Board of Commissioners for the County Complex property and simultaneously, an agreement with the Village on the "Railroad Square" property.

On January 21, 2015 the Strategic Planning Committee went to the Kalkaska Library Board of Trustees to recommend pursuing a lease agreement with the Kalkaska Board of Commissioners for the County Complex property while also pursuing a possible agreement with the Village on the "Railroad Square" property.

The focus of this document will be to reflect the due diligence completed by the Library Board of Trustees and the Strategic Planning Committee on acquiring a lease agreement with the Board of Commissioners on the County Property located near the Kaliseum and review the possibility of utilizing the Railroad Square as a potential site for a new library.

3. Background

KCL was started in 1934 by members of the Academea Club. The library was constructed in 1939 as part of a community building shared with the Chamber of Commerce. The original location has not changed, although additions were completed in 1977 and 1992, bringing the building to its current size of approximately 4,900 square feet.

One decade following the most recent expansion, the library was out of room and had reached its land boundaries with no ability to expand. In 2002 the KCL Board of Trustees contracted The Breton Group, Inc. to conduct a needs assessment. Targeting many deficiencies and evaluating the library based on established standards, their recommendation was to search for a new location, and construct a new library to meet the current needs.

To quote "The Needs Assessment & Facility Planning report for the KCL" received from The Breton Group, Inc., "...*The Kalkaska County Library has been faced with the challenge of finding enough space to provide services and resources necessary to meet the community's needs. The library staff has been using limited space strategically to provide a level of service comparable to much larger facilities. However, serious space constraints are preventing the library from expanding its collection and services, and offering additional programs necessary to meet the needs of both children and adults in the community.*"

Additional information from that report reveals several serious challenges to the library's ability to deliver programming and services to a community that is statistically growing and deserves at least a standard facility. Among the greatest concerns:

- Kalkaska County Library is 1/3 the size of libraries that serve similar sized communities throughout the State of Michigan, with approximately 41% less space than industry standards suggested to simply house its existing services and collections
- Surrounding site constrictions prevent expansion of the existing facility in its current location. No additional land is available for expansion of the existing library
- Parking is limited to 15 spaces, ¾ of which are leased spaces and subject to lease options being withdrawn should a change of ownership occur
- Children's circulation less than half of average circulation compared to libraries serving the same size communities within the State of Michigan

- Limited public services, including quiet reading areas, study rooms and staff work space
- Multiple surveys, including the Northwest Michigan Counsel of Governments, indicate that the community prefers that the Kalamazoo County Library be located on the west side of US 131 (proximity to schools and pedestrian safety)

3.1 Environmental Analysis

Circulation numbers have steadily increased over the last ten years. This is significant for the fact that we have consistently heard how the proliferation of computers and Internet access would mean a decline in library usage and circulation. Despite predictions that libraries were going to be made irrelevant or obsolete by the rapid developments in technology and digital media, the KCL circulation numbers have remained in a steady-state with population fluctuations.

Public demand for computer access has not diminished. Despite increased private ownership, the lack of high-speed access has kept and will keep the demand strong. Despite increased library acquisitions, the demand for public computing hours has stayed on par with availability. The economic climate of our county has driven more and more need for the kinds of services libraries provide.

Since 2004, yearly patron counts have increased by 19% and circulation (material checked out by patrons) has increased by 33%. Similarly, computer and Internet usage has increased 16% since 2007.

Programming has remained strong in our efforts to provide informational, cultural and educational curriculum to the community. In 2012, the KCL took part in a total of 117 programs (children, teen, and adult) with a total of nearly 4,000 people attending. However, the ability to do certain programs always presents a challenge due to lack of space; lack of amenities such as refrigeration or running water; or even as simple as having a space for post program cleanup. There is a great need for everyday conveniences that are lacking in the current facility.

Community meeting space is also a challenge at the current facility. Quite often public groups or individuals come into the library looking for quiet meeting rooms or study and tutoring areas, which are nonexistent. Those looking for quiet spaces often compete with the everyday goings on such as staff helping patrons or library programming. A larger space is needed to accommodate those looking for quiet spaces.

The dearth of space in the staff area has also posed problems. Currently the staff room is a 15'x12' space that hosts a multiple number of functions. The staff room serves as storage area for media (DVD's, audio books, music CD's) and newspaper archives. Also housed in this room is the desk of the Administrative Assistant, the book processing table, and the staff kitchen which consists of a small refrigerator, a microwave oven, and a chair. The facility has no doors or lockers to protect the personal valuables of the staff. There have been instances of patrons wandering into the staff area and purses being stolen.

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The facility restrooms also are inadequate, as there is a single stall each for the men and the women. Staff must share the bathroom with the public and this has been an issue with large groups.

Overall, the current site of the Kalkaska County Library lacks the room that is needed to provide the proper services that are expected of a Class 4 library.

3.2 Problem Analysis

Problem Identification: Inadequate infrastructure:

The current library, a single story, 75 year old building consisting of a main floor and a basement, utilized the available capacity on all levels. The location is bounded by US 131 to the West, a railroad grade to the East, a side street to the South, and private property to the North. The library is unable to increase its use of the older/southern third of the facility (load bearing capacity is inadequate) and in the newer/northern 2/3 of the facility, it has utilized all of the capacity available on both floors. The parking is also inadequate, and even if engineers and architects were able to find a way around the structural deficiency, the fact remains that the parking situation would only be exacerbated.

Problem Remediation

The perception is that the community would like to see “something done” to improve the library’s ability to carry out their mission and has expressed discontent with the numerous studies and failed attempts. Numerous studies and surveys have demonstrated that the community supports the library in principle, recognizes and sympathizes with the overcrowding dilemma. However, the economic challenges facing the county taxpayers hinder the ability of the community to rally fiscal support for a new facility.

In August 1999, a separate fund called “The County Library Building Fund” was set up by the KCL Board of Trustees. \$100,000 was set aside into that fund with the understanding that fund would be used for the building, land to build and / or moving expenses associated with a new library. Frugal spending and careful planning has allowed this fund to continue to grow steadily.

A “New Library Construction Fund” has been established with a major donation from the estate of Charles “Chuck” Heffer and gifts and donations from patrons toward a new library. This windfall gift plus the County Library Building Fund creates an opportunity to leverage the money into this project to secure an improved library facility and enhance services.

4. Project Vision

A new facility is necessary to properly serve the residents of Kalkaska County.

Libraries are an integral part of a community's infrastructure. Historically, when libraries expand, so does their circulation. A new facility would give Kankaska a much-needed boost to its cultural and educational offerings. A facility that meets the current needs, with adequate parking, would be a step in the right direction. A new site with an option of future expansion possibilities is the most prudent path. A facility that "only" meets current needs will face the same crowding conditions in the future.

5. Project Objectives

County Complex Property – not recommended

Below is the Timeline of the due diligence on the County Complex Property.

January 12th, 2015: Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) one page "Lease Agreement" created.

February 4th, 2015: Lynnette Cervone presents the finished SPC concept document to Health & Welfare Committee, presents "SPC Lease Agreement".

March 4th, 2015: Lynnette, Mike Moran and Bradley Chaplin meet with Health & Welfare Committee to continue the open dialogue with the group.

March 20th, 2015: Strategic Planning Committee meets to discuss Lease Agreement - "Letter of Understanding."

April 1st, 2015: Mike and Susie Burns meet with Health & Welfare Committee to continue the open dialogue with the group and ask for clarification on the "Letter of Understanding."

April 23rd, 2015: Received nine-page Lease/Option to Purchase Agreement from Board of Commissioners.

April 29th, 2015: Special Library Board Meeting held to review Lease/Option to Purchase Agreement from Board of Commissioners. Board decides it is not acceptable as written and asks SPC to revise.

May 6th, 2015: Bradley, Lynnette and Susie meet with Health & Welfare Committee to inform them that Library Board is still reviewing Lease Agreement.

May 29th, 2015: Bradley informed Deb Hill of errors in "Exhibit A" of Lease Agreement.

May 31st, 2015: Lynnette emails Library Board's revised Lease Agreement to members of the Health & Welfare Committee; Mike Buchanan, Kevin Stein, Patty Cox for review prior to next meeting.

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June 3rd, 2015: Lynnette, Mike and Susie meet with Health & Welfare Committee to discuss Library Board revised Lease proposal.

June 16th, 2015: Mike Buchanan informs Lynnette by phone that the Lease Agreement revised by the Library Board was rejected by BOC Counsel except for allowing time for a design to be developed to determine a cost for a Capital Campaign.

June 24, 2015: Lynnette informs Mike Buchanan by phone the Boards request for a written answer from the Board of Commissioners and/or Counsel regarding the Library Board's revised Lease proposal.

July 1, 2015: Lynnette presents "Memorandum" document to Health and Welfare rejecting the agreement revised by the BOC Counsel, thus making the County property no longer a viable option for a new Kaskaska County Library.

Despite good faith attempts to negotiate a fair and reasonable lease agreement with the County Board of Commissioners, the stringent terms (primarily those requiring asset forfeiture) would result in an abdication of the Library's fiduciary responsibility to the residents and taxpayers of Kaskaska County by the Kaskaska County Library Board of Trustees.

Downtown "Railroad Square" -- not recommended

Building a new library on "Railroad Square" is no longer a consideration primarily due to the conflict with the Village Grand Vision for an Open Space

6. Scope

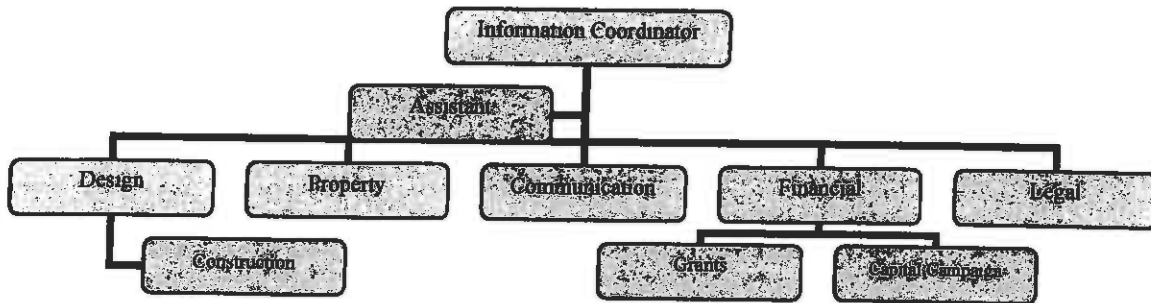
With the door closed on an amicable lease/option to purchase the County Complex property with the Board of Commissioners and the new direction of "Railroad Square" being utilized as an Open Space, the Strategic Planning Committee will continue to investigate potential land available within the Village of Kaskaska, narrow the focus to a specific option(s), and make a formal recommendation to the Library Board of Trustees.

The goal is to find land to accommodate a facility that meets industry standards.

Key factors to consider are:

- Cost
- Proximity to Historic Downtown area
- Safe and easily accessible location
- Sufficient room for parking

Once a recommendation has been made and approved by the KCL Board of Trustees as to which property to pursue, continuing due diligence would be accomplished in the following committees:



The above list of committees is NOT all-inclusive. It is a list of preliminary committees.

7. Outcome

Unfortunately, after spending six months negotiating a lease/option to purchase agreement with the Board of Commissioners on the County Complex Property three key points were nonnegotiable by both parties thus dissolving the potential for the construction of a new library on that property.

Due to the redirection of the Village to utilize “Railroad Square” as an Open Space this too dissolves the potential for the construction of a new library on that property.

The Strategic Planning Committee has now redirected its attention to available property within the Historic Downtown area of Kaskaska. Once potential land is found the committee will make a formal recommendation to the Library Board of Trustees.

8. Project Recommendation

With the door closed on the option for a lease/option to purchase from the County or the Village and the recognition of the need for “Room to Grow”, the Strategic Planning Committee recommends:

1. Further review of property available within the Historic Downtown area of Kaskaska
2. Pursuit of foundation gifts, grants and a Capital Campaign

These recommendations will be reviewed in further detail in the Project Concept Document called: Kaskaska County Library New Building Project Phase III

9. Appendix

9.1 Supporting Documentation

2002 Breton Group Needs Assessment Report and Executive Summary

2006 Community Survey, parts I and II, and Synopsis

2010 Capital Campaign Study

2013 NMCOG Recreational Plan Survey with comments and Summary

2013 Kalkaska County Recreational Planning Questionnaire Report

2013 Draft Kalkaska County Recreational Plan (NMCOG)

2013 Lessons Learned New Kalkaska Library & Millage

Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber, Inc – Preliminary Space Needs Worksheet

Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber, Inc – Library Option

Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber, Inc – Library Perspective

Library Board of Trustees proposed Lease Agreement

Powerpoint presentation: Board of Commissioners (02/04/2015)

BOC Counsel's Lease/Option-to-Purchase

SPC Revision of Counsel's Contract (5/31/2015)

Memorandum (7/1/2015)

Property Descriptions

Downtown "Railroad Square" property

County Complex property and photo

Property behind Shopko

Property on First Street

Current parcel information and photo