

SYNOPSIS OF KALKASKA COUNTY LIBRARY FEASIBILITY STUDY

JUNE, 2006

After many months of deliberation with assistance from several community members, The Kalkaska County Library Board commissioned a feasibility study of an ideal plan for library expansion. The conceptual drawing included 15,000 square feet and was proposed to be built on county property on Island Lake Rd. using green construction techniques. The projected cost for the project was \$2,500,000. Sixty-six county residents were interviewed to assess the opinions of the public regarding this plan. Following is a summary of the results of the feasibility study which includes compilation of the interview data.

Positive Factors:

- There is a firm commitment to library services in the county. All respondents felt the library was an important part of the community and most thought the current programs and services were very satisfactory.
- Respondents indicated 100% that a larger library for the County is needed.
- There was an indication that citizens would financially support an expanded library, but not to the extent needed for this proposal.
- Local foundations expressed openness to assisting with a Capital Campaign for a larger library.
- Green construction was seen as a good value by most respondents, and the Kresge Foundation would be a potential funding source for planning of such a facility.

Negative Factors:

- There is not significant support for the Island Lake building site.
- There is not a clear suggestion of an alternate site.
- The proposed cost of \$2,500,000 is much higher than the community is able to support.

- The continued wrangling over the Kaliseum creates apprehension in the community for a similar project.
- A history of lack of cooperation among community members and apathy for growth may be a stumbling block to a library expansion project.

It is recommended that the Library Board with continued assistance of community members review alternate plans, especially concentrating on sites in the downtown area. Remodeling and/or adding on to an existing structure will be well received by the community. A Capital Campaign will be the most acceptable method of funding a new facility with a maximum project price of \$1,500,000.

Projections indicate that \$650,000 to \$700,000 could be raised in local gifts over a three to five year period. This would require significant contributions from 5% of local residents. It is possible to secure the remaining funds from fundraisers, smaller local contributions and support through grants from governmental units and private foundations.

The continued involvement and encouragement of the project by the Friends of the Kalkaska Library is imperative. This organization can provide the leadership of a Capital Campaign.

A proposed library expansion must have broad based community support; active and involved volunteers; a well planned budget and timeline; a well designed action plan; and a focused and committed vision. Every effort should be made to help County leadership and residents see that a new library will be a catalyst for economic, educational, cultural and recreational growth of Kalkaska County.

A complete report of this Feasibility Study is available at the Kalkaska County Library.

*Respectfully submitted,
Mandy Gibson, Advisor for Library Development
7300 US 131 N
Fife Lake, MI 49633*

Kalkaska County Library

Feasibility Study Interviews, May 2006

Background:

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself – your family, and how you are part of the Kalkaska community.

**Age Single/Married Children status how long a resident,
what township? Where from originally?**

Community issues such as the economy, growth, and personality of Kalkaska.

Knowledge of the Library:

2. Are you familiar with the Kalkaska County Library? **Very, somewhat, not**

3. I want to ask you for your impressions of the Kalkaska Library --- what do you think is its image? Do you use the library or have you used it in the past?

Yes, no, and how often. What do you use it for?

4. Do you think the library is an important part of this community?
If so why.

5. Do you think the library offers the appropriate services and programs for the community? **Adequate, not, more than adequate.**

What more would you like to see or do you think could be eliminated?

5. Do you use another library? Which one and why

6. Additional comments about current library.

Thoughts and Insights on Proposed Project:

We sent you some information about the proposed new library and we would like your thoughts and ideas about it. At this point I want you to NOT be thinking of the costs, (we'll talk about the money in a few minutes), but the service side.

7. Do you think that the materials you received supported the need for a new library? **Yes no**

8. What do you personally think about the proposal? **Lengthy comments**

9. What do you think other people in this community will think about the idea?

10. Would you change the proposal in any way? If so, what are your suggestions?

Funding:

As you can see from the proposal package, the Kalkaska Library Board is committed to building a new facility with a capital campaign. They do not want to use taxes to build, but will want taxpayer support for operation. Currently county property owners pay about \$12 a year for each \$100,000 of property value (\$50,000 sev). The increase for operation could go to \$25 or \$35 per year.

11. Would you be in favor of increased operating millage if there was no increase in taxes to build a library? **Yes No Maybe**

12. Do you think the projected cost is valid for the library project?

Yes no don't know

13. Do you think this amount can be raised in private fundraising, grants and foundation backing?

14. Do you think the Kalkaska community will support a campaign for funding the project? Rate the potential for success - **Excellent Very good good poor impossible.**

15. Would you personally be open to financially supporting this project in some way? **Definitely, probably, not sure no. If yes, what would be your expected level of commitment over a three to five year period?**

Over \$5,000, Between \$1,000 and \$5,000, Less than \$1,000.

16. If the money could not all be raised in a capital campaign and a bond millage for part of the cost of the project was on the ballot, would you support it? **Definitely, probably, not sure, no.**

17. Would you take an active role as a volunteer in a fundraising campaign?

Definitely, probably, not sure, no.

18. If yes, do you have ideas on where you would most likely be helpful and enjoy being involved?

19. How do you think others in the community would respond to the above questions concerning involvement and funding?

**Many would support financially, Not enough support financially,
Many would support as volunteers, Not enough volunteers. Unsure.**

20. Who in the community do you think should be part of this campaign to assure its success (organizations and/or individuals)?

21. Are there any other issues that you think pertain to this proposed project for Kalkaska County that the Library Board should be aware of when making a decision to proceed or not?

Thank you for time and your input. Your confidential answers will be compiled along with the other interviews and the results will be used for decision making of the Kalkaska Library Board.

Mandy Gibson
7300 US 131 N
Fife Lake MI 49633

June 13, 2006

To: Kalkaska County Library Board

From: Mandy Gibson

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you on this fine project. I have appreciated getting to know each of you, members of the Friends and so many great people who live in Kalkaska County.

I would like to assist you as you move forward with a library expansion plan. Depending on the route you now take, there are a few different ways I can help you. Of course I would be eager to be an advisor for your capital campaign, but I can also facilitate the process leading up to the campaign.

I expect that you may pursue the next level of planning with a collaboration of several local organizations and governmental bodies. As the feasibility study report indicates, **your continued success will depend on a well designed action plan with a focused and committed vision.** I feel that the steps you now take will frame this plan and set the tone for its future development and success.

The proposed timeline that I gave to you in January is still quite accurate. This would indicate that for the remainder of this year you create a more detailed plan. In the winter of 2007 you could begin the lead grant and gift process. A capital campaign could begin in the spring or summer of 2007 and continue for a year. Of course you know that working for a renewal/increase of your operating millage will need to be addressed at that point. With a successful millage and progress in the capital campaign, it is possible that you could be serving patrons in a new facility by 2010!

This timeline may be extended if you decide to pursue a grant from the Kresge Foundation for green construction planning. This will add several months to the planning stage but may be very well worth the wait.

I again thank you. Please keep me informed of your progress and I am looking forward to continuing my work with your organization.

Phone: (231) 879-4444
Fax: (231) 879-4273
Email: mandygibson@charter.net