

SECTION FIVE: CURRENT FACILITIES/FUTURE NEEDS

This Section represents the primary effort of the *Library Facilities Study* in collecting data on existing facility resources and projecting future needs. Activities focused on the development of a quantitative and qualitative inventory of the space utilized by the Fort Worth Library (FWL), as the foundation for long-term planning. An overall survey of existing conditions was conducted in such a manner as to allow for the general assessment of existing conditions to be expressed in terms of comparative benchmarks and/or order-of-magnitude costs, relative to new building construction. With this Section of the report, the Consultants document an objective evaluation of the condition of all existing public library buildings in Fort Worth.

Evaluation Methodology

Our methodology was devised to assure a complete, fair, and objective functional evaluation of all FWL facilities as they existed when we initiated our work during site visits to all FWL facilities in November of 2009. At each location, our team of consultants interviewed library staff and observed the facilities. We identified factors that have contributed both to the library's strengths and weaknesses. Our observations have enabled us to plan for library services and space that will serve the needs of library users for the next ten years.

Our work looked at the downstream impact of service and technology strategies and recommendations. That is: "What will happen tomorrow if we do this today? How will library services be impacted, enhanced, or changed by the implementation of our recommendations?" Our methodology employed realistic goals, objectives, and recommendations.

Library Functionality Evaluation. Godfrey's assessed current facilities for their functionality and presence of modern library factors. As the Library Facilities Consultant for the project, we analyzed:

- The capacity of existing book stacks, as measured against industry standards;
- The height and clear/cross aisle space of existing book stacks measured against ADA requirements;
- The amount of seating, height, and condition of all tables and chairs for different age groups;
- Staff workroom and office space for functionality and amount of space;
- The size, location, and amenities of meeting, conference, and/or group study rooms;
- The location of library materials return "chutes" and whether or not they are enclosed spaces and/or in fire suppressible environments;
- The size of foyer and building lobby with regard to ability to serve as an effective transition space between the outside and the inside;
- The number and condition of computers for both public and staff use, as well as other library-specific technologies;
- If and how library materials, especially new materials, are merchandised and marketed;
- The number of existing parking spaces, as measured against Consultant recommendations; and
- Exterior and interior signage.

Library Technology Assessment. At each location, our Information Technology Consultant interviewed library staff and observed public use of the technology. Staff at each library completed questionnaires provided by the Consultant, commenting on various aspects of current technology implementation, including quantity and location of equipment, as well as additional technologies that they believe FWL should have.

We then compared FWL with State of Texas standards and other public libraries for number of computers, and recommended future information technology deployment.

Physical Building Assessments. Godfrey's Associates evaluated each current library building on its merits as a sound structure. The building inventory and physical evaluation process is the basis for integration of the assessment of existing facility **resources** with current and projected functional **needs**. The physical assessment included the measurement and documentation of the following, as detailed for each existing library in Appendix Five:

- Background of the building, in terms of history, additions, and original purpose;
- Size and boundaries of the site area, landscaping and lighting, and issues concerning the parking of automobiles at, or in proximity to, the site;
- Current total square footage resources in the facility, occupied by either library or other functions, and a calculation of net-to-gross square footage efficiencies;
- A description and rating of existing physical conditions of the building, in terms of architecture, mechanical systems, and electrical systems;
- A summary of any capital improvement projects currently underway, planned, and/or needed;
- Items which influence future development, such as issues of historic significance, dealing with both the existing building and the adjacent neighborhood; and
- Conversion of the physical evaluation ratings into costs to retrofit the existing building to meet the needs of a modern public library baseline.

Projection of Future Needs. In order to develop a clear definition of future library facility needs, we fused these evaluations with our previous work to date, including:

- Comparative data of Fort Worth Benchmark City and Index City libraries from Section One;
- Public library facility standards, benchmarks, and best practices for public and staff spaces from Section Two;

- The feasibility of alternative facility models from Section Three; and
- Customer analytics/market segmentation data about customers for each existing and potential library, and potential library locations, from Section Four.

Library Facility Locations

As delineated in Section Four, the Customer Analytics Consultant for FWL, Buxton Company, submitted two alternative scenarios for locating library facilities in Fort Worth. It should be noted that these locations were chosen so as to increase the accessibility of library services to the Fort Worth citizenry. In both scenarios, the number of households within an eight-minute drive to a library was increased from the current level of 75%, to over 87% - a significant improvement. The library locations proposed were based upon in-depth analysis of the customer base of FWL, as well as potential customers.

It should also be noted that the two scenarios proposed by Buxton Company differed in terms of the number of facilities required for coverage. One scenario respected the existing locations, and needed to add six new facilities to the current 16 (total of 22), to reach 87%. The other scenario selected ideal locations, without regard to the location of current libraries, requiring - as chance would have it - 16 sites to reach 87% coverage. In both scenarios, library sites were identified based on consumer-driven data, without influence from City of Fort Worth budget issues, political agendas, or special interests.

As the Library Facilities Consultant for the project, Godfrey's Associates sees it as our responsibility to make library siting recommendations that are tempered with the data we generated through our evaluation of existing facilities. These recommendations take into account functional and economic factors of the specific buildings when determining future locations of facilities for the Fort Worth Library.

Operational Efficiency. One primary premise driving our recommendations was efficiency in operational costs. The current FWL system operates too many libraries that are too small to house all of the programs and services required by customers of a modern library. Economies of scale indicate that larger library buildings can be run at a lower cost per square foot. Therefore, in the opinion of the Library Facilities Consultant, public libraries in Fort Worth should be fewer and larger. Savings from operating fewer libraries can be invested in technologies that will lower operational costs further. So, melding Buxton Company sites with our in-depth assessment of current facilities, we propose the following locations, current and future, for an improved Library system.

Shortfall in Library Space

Currently, the Fort Worth Library utilizes approximately 326,000 square feet of space, which equates to 0.45 square feet per capita. The nationally recognized standard is 0.60 square feet per capita. By the year 2020, the population of Fort Worth is estimated to be 926,080. In order to reach the 0.60 standard, almost 230,000 square feet of library space would need to be added – an aggressive undertaking. Therefore, Godfrey's Associates recommends the following strategy to expand and improve the Fort Worth Library.

Existing Facility Locations to be Retained. Five current library locations were pinpointed by Buxton as prime spots:

- Central Library;
- East Regional Library;
- East Berry Library (one block from Buxton location);
- Ridglea Library (one block from Buxton location); and
- Northwest Library (within three blocks of Buxton location).

Three current library locations are recommended by Godfrey's to remain in place, for the reasons listed below:

- Shamblee Library, because it was opened in 2008 and is a valuable resource;
- Southwest Regional Library, because it is of adequate size, is close to a Buxton-identified site, and the current location works well with the relocated Seminary South and Wedgwood Libraries noted below;
- Summerglenn Library, because we believe long-term library system expansion in far north Fort Worth needs a site farther north than the Buxton-identified location, making the current location important for better long-term coverage.

Existing Facilities to be Relocated. Six current libraries should be moved, either because the current location cannot effectively support expansion, it is less convenient for customers, or both:

- Diamond Hill/Jarvis Library, moved to a location on North Main Street pinpointed by Buxton;
- Meadowbrook Library, moved to a location further west on Lancaster Boulevard pinpointed by Buxton;
- Northside Library, moved to the location on North Main;
- Riverside Library, moved to a more accessible location farther east, in closer proximity to retail development;
- Seminary South Library, moved to a location in Le Gran Plaza Mall;
- Wedgwood Library, moved to a location farther south, in closer proximity to more customers.

Once replacement locations are opened, each of these six libraries would be closed and either sold to the private sector, or re-purposed for one or more City of Fort Worth services other than a library.

New Locations to be Constructed or Leased. Specific new locations alluded to above include five new libraries to replace aging facilities and/or provide more convenience for customers:

- North Main Library, replacing Diamond Hill/Jarvis and Northside Libraries;
- South Library, replacing Wedgwood Library,
- New Seminary South Library, replacing the current Seminary South Library;
- New Riverside Library, replacing the current Riverside Library; and
- Lancaster & Oakland, replacing Meadowbrook Library.

Six new locations providing service to areas currently underserved include:

- Far North Library;
- Museum District;
- East Berry & New York;
- Camp Bowie & Las Vegas;
- Eighth & Robert; and
- Bryant Irvin & Oakmont.

Also, the East Berry, Ridglea, and Summerglenn Libraries are recommended to be expanded in, or very near, their current locations. Central, East Regional, and Southwest Regional are recommended to each undergo interior reconfiguration. BOLD, COOL, Northwest, and Shamblee Libraries are recommended to remain unchanged.

Based on data from the Customer Analytics Consultant, Godfrey's Associates recommends that of the 20 facilities that comprise this new and improved Fort Worth Library system, 12 would be full-service libraries. Eight would be satellite libraries, serving targeted demographic groups of customers, which includes the BOLD and COOL Libraries.

Summaries of Each Library Facility

The analysis presented here in Section Five serves as the foundation for the synthesis of the planning efforts into recommendations for the future of the Fort Worth Library. We include this specific information, in subsections related to each facility proposed for an improved Library system, current and future:

- **Facility Data:** History and statistics of the building;
- **Facility Analysis:** Size of the building and site – comparing the existing condition with the projected size these facilities should currently be to meet standards;
- **Distance & Drive Times:** Mileage and minutes between the given facility and other libraries;
- **Demographic Data & Findings:** Data from the Customer Analytics Consultant about the make-up of customers, and potential customers, in the given library's trade area;
- **Collections Analysis:** Measurements of the capacity and composition of materials housed at the given library;
- **Analysis of Usage Data:** Calculation of productivity measures for the given library, and how it ranks with the other libraries in the Fort Worth system;
- **Findings:** A summary of key facts about the given library that influence its ability to serve the citizens of Fort Worth;
- **Recommendations:** Specific steps the Consultants believe are required to improve the given library; and
- **Reprogrammed Service Delivery Mix:** Conversion of the above data into future needs for library collections, seating, computers, and staff.

We begin with the 16 existing FWL facilities, followed by the library facilities proposed to be added to the Fort Worth Library system by the year 2020.