4 *Essential Service Goals for the Converse County Library*

The following sections discuss prospective service goals for the Converse County Library. These goals address

- 4.1 Collections
- 4.2 Reader seating
- 4.3 Staff work stations
- 4.4 Meeting / program accommodations
- 4.5 Special use functions
- 4.6 Nonassignable functions

Following a discussion of these essential resource service goals, an estimate of the library's space need is made following the methodology outlined in the preceding section of the report, and based on the resources to be housed at the Douglas and Glenrock facilities.

4.1 COLLECTIONS

Collection space can be allocated upon the determination by the board and staff of projected collection development parameters for the library's book collection, periodicals collection, and nonprint collection. Access to electronic information resources is also considered as part of the library's collection development goals.

4 .1.1 Books

A recommendation for the number of volumes to accommodate at the Converse County Library emerges from a comparison of statistical resources.

Against the library's in-state peers – Wyoming libraries serving 10,000 to 25,000 population – the library's population ranks it at the 33rd percentile. It's reported collection ranks it at the 16th percentile. (Bear in mind that the NCES data used for the comparative analyses is two years old and that in those two years, the library has weeded its book collection further.) The library's *projected* service population will fall at roughly the 60th percentile. If total population and total resources indeed tend to grow together, this suggests the 60th percentile as a possible starting point for consideration of a service goal for development of the print collection. Among libraries in Wyoming serving 10,000 to 25,000 population, the 60th percentile defines a book collection of 95,000 volumes.

It is important to consider the viability of this potential service goal. Is a collection development goal of 95,000 volumes realistic? Given the library's

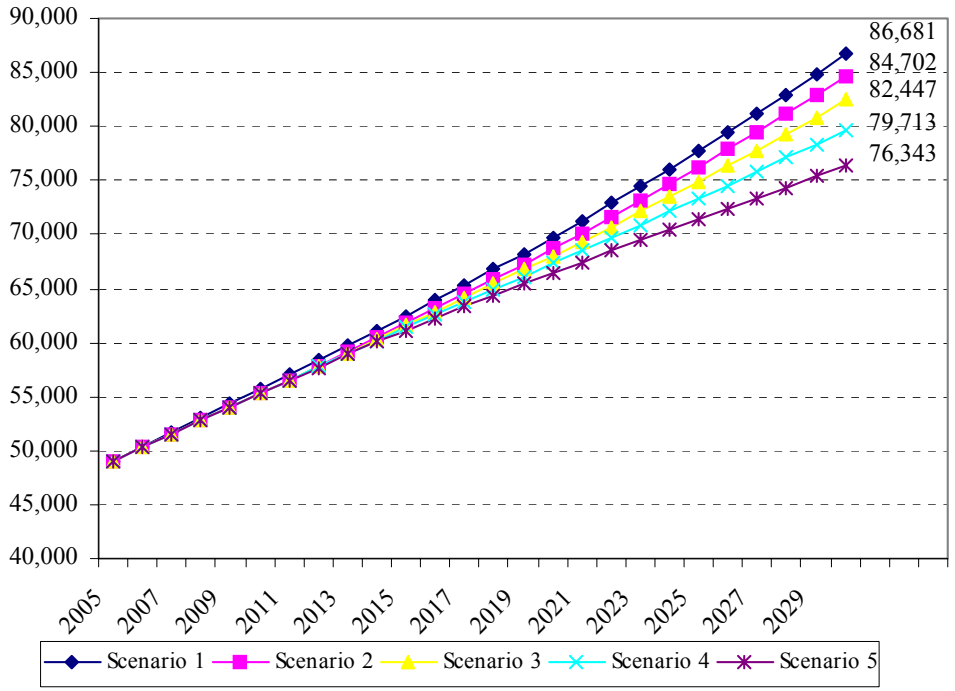
acquisition rates, can the library reasonably expect to achieve that goal?

The library's *net* addition rate reveals nothing useful. As noted previously, the library has been weeding the print collection in order to make storage and display space available for increased nonprint collections, as well as the installation of new computer network stations for public use. Over the last five years, the library's net acquisition rate has been a *negative* 1,132 volumes per year. If that rate were extended into the future, the library's collection would actually be weeded out of existence in 43 years! That is hardly a suitable service response.

An alternate (and in this case much more productive) means of exploring future growth trends is to examine potential future patterns regarding the library's *gross* rate of growth and apply alternate assumptions regarding the library's withdrawal rates. Figure 4(1) on the following page summarizes five growth scenarios built on the library's recent gross rate of acquisition per year. As noted earlier, the library has added, on average, 1,363 volumes per year not factoring in withdrawals. Figure 4(1) anticipates that the library will be able to increase the gross rate of growth by one-half of one percent per year over the next five years, by 1% per year over the five years after that, by 1.5% over the five years after that, by 2% per years over the next five years, and by 2.5% over the next five years. By the year 2030, the resulting annual rate of gross adds will grow to 1,977 volumes.

The gross rate of addition then needs to be balanced by a specified rate of withdrawal. Although the library in recent years has been withdrawing heavily to accommodate growth in other areas, any library will typically withdraw materials

FIGURE 4(1)
COLLECTION GROWTH FORECASTS



to keep the collections fresh and up-to-date. In Scenario 1, a withdrawal rate of 5% – 1 volume withdrawn for every 20 added – is maintained throughout the planning period. In Scenario 2, a constant rate of withdrawal of 1 volume for

every 10 added is maintained throughout the planning period. In Scenario 3, a withdrawal rate of 1 volume for every 10 added is maintained through the year 2010, and then the withdrawal rate is gradually increased until it reaches 1 for every 5 adds in 2030. Scenario 4 gradually increases the withdrawal rate until it reaches 1 for every 3 adds in 2030. And Scenario 5 increases the withdrawal rate until it reaches 1 for every 2 adds in 2030.

These scenarios suggest that the library could reasonably expect to expand its print collection to as much as 86,600 volumes, depending on future practices regarding withdrawals. If the library were to aspire to a larger print collection, it would require a more significant commitment to bolster and enhance the library's collection budget.

With this in mind, a preliminary service target of 90,000 volumes is established – slightly greater than the growth scenarios might suggest, but still slightly below the *50th* percentile (or median) measure for Wyoming libraries serving 10,000 to 25,000 population.

4.1.2 Magazines

A less assertive goal is recommended for the library's future magazine holdings. There is clear evidence that periodical literature is migrating into digital forms, in turn affecting the inventory of paper copies that most libraries need to maintain. Increasingly today, if a library patron seeks a specific magazine article on a specific topic, that query is fulfilled by using electronic databases. As a result, paper copies of magazines are used more casually today, as a browsing resource. This less demanding application also reduces the impetus to expand the

collections. Certainly the typical public library today is far less likely to seek to expand this resource than would have been the case a generation ago.

According to the data set used in the NCES comparative analysis, the library maintains a collection of 139 magazine titles. This represents the median in the sample of Wyoming libraries serving 10,000 to 25, 000 population. It is suggested that the library sustain that service level as it moves into the future.

Furthermore, because a collection of 139 titles is relatively modest, it is recommended that the library anticipate retaining *all* of those titles in back issues – it is unlikely that in such a relatively limited subscription list the library will be collecting any titles that can be considered ephemeral. The collection of paper copy back issues should be maintained for no more than two years.

4.1.3 Nonprint

The nonprint collection presently is one of the real highlights at the library. As shown previously, the library's nonprint holdings are more extensive than one might otherwise expect to find in a library serving a community of this size. The proportion of nonprint holdings to print holdings has increased from 3.6 nonprint items for every 100 print items in 1992 to 12.2 nonprint for every 100 print in 2005. Public demands for nonprint materials show no signs of slacking off.

With this in mind, the library should establish a nonprint collection development goal equal to at least 20% of the print collection. If the library's print collection is to grow to 90,000 volumes, it means the library should plan to

accommodate a nonprint collection of 18,000 items.

4.1.4 Electronic / digital resources

The library presently maintains 20 computer network stations for public use (including on-line public access catalogs) – 15 at the Douglas facility and 5 at the Glenrock facility. Current demands for access to electronic information resources suggest that the inventory could be increased by at least half again as many stations (were there sufficient space to do so) just to accommodate today's needs.

To meet future needs for this increasingly important resource, the library should plan to increase its inventory of computer network stations for public use by a factor of at least two-and-a-half – increasing the inventory county-wide to 50. Note that in the future, the library's inventory of computer network stations for public use increasingly will be complemented by portable, laptop equipment that library users will bring to the library themselves.

4.2 READER SEATING

A library's inventory of reader seating usually tallies only open, general purpose reader seating. Seats in a specialized or dedicated use environment – in a small group study room, for example, or at a computer terminal or a microform reader or an index table – are not included in such a count. Today, the Converse County Library maintains 41 general reader seats at the Douglas facility and 23 at the Glenrock facility – 64 in all.

The literature on library space planning includes several formulas for recommending reader seating quantities in public libraries. Typically these formulas are presented in the form of X seats per 1,000 population, with X decreasing as the population increases. Library Planning Associates, Inc. has crafted an interpolation of these various formulas, the result of which is a recommendation that a library serving a population of Converse County's size provide roughly 80 reader seats to meet the needs of today's service population, and 86 reader seats to meet the needs of tomorrow's service population.

The conventional formulas do not appear to allow for much growth in the inventory of reader seating. To a large degree, this is because the Converse County's two-facility service configuration leads the library to provide more reader seating today than would ordinarily be the case for a library serving a community of comparable size. Among 121 libraries nationwide serving 12,000 to 13,000 population, just 21 (17.3%) maintain more than a single facility. Among 272 libraries nationwide serving 14,000 to 16,000 population, 36 (13.2%) maintain more than one facility. The conventional formulas regarding seating

allocations are predicated on conventional service patterns. And Converse County's choice to maintain two facilities is an unconventional configuration for a service community of its size, albeit a necessary one given the geographic size of its service area.

For this reason, an adaptation of the conventional formulas must be explored.

Were the library's two facilities operating as two independent libraries, each serving a proportionate share of the total county population, the future service population of the Douglas facility would be the equivalent of roughly 10,500 and the future service population of the Glenrock facility would be the equivalent of 4,500. Applying the conventional seating formulas to these two populations produces a recommendation of 72 reader seats for Douglas and 47 reader seats for Glenrock. Were the county being served through two independent libraries, the combined recommended seating inventory would be 119 reader seats.

But because the two libraries are *not* independent, a recommendation of 119 reader seats *overstates* the case every bit as much as a recommendation 86 reader seats *understates* the case. The reality likely lies somewhere within that range.

As a starting point for planning purposes, an allocation of 110 reader seats is suggested.

4.3 STAFF WORK STATIONS

The space needed to support staff operations relates to the specific nature of those operations. There is not necessarily a correlation between the number of individuals or full-time equivalent staff on a library's payroll and the number of staff work stations that a library may need. Certainly a larger staff complement will require more space, but the number of staff is not the sole determinant for how many work stations a library will need. Work flow, work loads, efficient work patterns, and patron demands for support can also condition the number of work stations a library needs to provide. The number of work stations in turn determines the amount of space the library will need to support its staff.

The number of staff work stations recommended here for the Douglas facility – 20 in all – is based on the level of current and projected patron activity at public service desks, the consultants' direct observation of current work routines, the need to provide for additional stations as work loads and work patterns change, and knowledge of conventional library practice. This list tallies public service work stations first, followed by stations in offices or workrooms.

- Entry / circulation
  - 2 charging stations at a circulation desk
  - 1 charging / registration station at a circulation desk
  - 1 station for sorting / reshelving (see following note)
- Children's
  - 1 station at a children's desk

- Circulation / staff workroom
  - 2 stations for clerical support
  - 1 station for interlibrary loan
  - 1 station for the children's librarian
  - 1 station for the children's assistant
  - 1 station for the young adult coordinator
  - 1 station for outreach coordinator
  - 1 station for volunteers
- Technical & network services workroom
  - 1 station for ordering & unpacking
  - 1 station for cataloging & inputting
  - 1 station for processing
  - 1 station for computer diagnostics
  - 1 station for server maintenance
- Administration
  - 1 station for the bookkeeper / business manager
  - 1 enclosed office for the library director

Note that the sorting / shelving station may migrate into the proposed staff workroom as continuing considerations of workload configurations are made. Also note that the staff workroom will need to include, among other features, a large assembly / project table, where Douglas staff can conveniently spread out projects as needed (program or storytime preparation, for example). Consideration can also be given to adding a service desk on the floor for the young adult librarian to support YA services after school hours.

The number of staff work stations recommended here for the Glenrock

facility – 9 in all – is likewise based on current and projected activity levels, on the consultant's direct observation of current routines, and the like.

- Entry / circulation
  - 2 charging stations at a circulation desk
  - 1 charging / registration station at a circulation desk
  - 1 station for sorting / reshelving (see following note)
- Children's
  - 1 station at a children's desk (see following note)
- Staff workroom
  - 1 enclosed office for the branch manager
  - 1 clerical support desk
  - 1 cataloging desk
  - 1 processing table / counter

Note that either the sorting / shelving station and the children's desk (or both) may migrate into the proposed staff workroom as continuing considerations of workload configurations are made. Also note that the staff workroom will need to include, among other features, a large assembly / project table, where Glenrock staff can conveniently spread out projects as needed (program or storytime preparation, for example, or computer diagnostics).

4.4 MEETING / PROGRAM SPACE

Rooms to support library programs and meetings have become commonplace features of today's public library. These rooms are used by library staff to sponsor lectures and other activities that are intended to boost the use of the library's traditional resources. Children's department staff will use a meeting room or programming space to present storytimes that are meant to encourage children to explore the world of reading. Sometimes staff will use a meeting room to conduct a staff meeting or an in-service training session. Subject to the library's policy, meeting rooms can also be reserved for use by the public at large.

Today, the question is less one of whether to provide any meeting facilities in the library but what kind of facilities to provide and what the audience capacities should be.

Staff reports a growing interest from patrons in having spaces in the library that can be used for meetings and programs. An interest in having meeting rooms available for public use surfaced during information gathering efforts undertaken by the study team. Additional rooms at the library would complement other meeting spaces that are already available for the general public in the schools, and other locations in the community.

At the Douglas facility, a large, multi-purpose room should be provided. This room will have a flat floor and moveable seating. Possibly a portable stage will be provided for the front of the room. State-of-the-art presentation equipment should be part of this room. It should be divisible into at least two

smaller rooms for increased flexibility. The capacity of this room should be as much as 150. Consideration should be given to a second, smaller meeting room to seat up to 50.

The Douglas facility should also support a board / conference room to seat up to 20. Given the schedule of children's programs and activities, a dedicated storytime room in the children's department is warranted. The advantages of this dedicated space are twofold: it keeps the children's programs closer to the very collections that the programs hope to encourage the children to use, and it frees the general meeting room for other uses during the day. This should have a maximum audience capacity of 35, including children and caregivers.

At the Glenrock facility, because the associated service population is smaller, the meeting facilities can be more modest. A multi-purpose room to seat up to 100 should be provided. This room will have a flat floor and moveable seating. Because of the smaller scale of this room, a portable stage is not likely to be as great a need. The room should definitely enjoy state-of-the-art presentation equipment, and it should be divisible into at least two smaller rooms.

This meeting room should be complemented by a board / conference room to seat up to 15. The furnishings in this room should be selected to accommodate rearranging the tables and seating here to support children's storytimes in a smaller, more cozy space than will otherwise be available in the larger Glenrock meeting room (the larger room will be available for the occasional large-audience children's programs).

4.5 SPECIAL USE FUNCTIONS

Special use space refers to additional public and staff spaces that have not been accounted for in the previous four types of floor space. Examples of special use space include photocopiers, index tables, microform reader-printers, a staff lounge, a book sale storage area, a gift shop, possibly a patron lounge. Special use space also accounts for space for small group study rooms.

For purposes of the initial space needs assessment it is important to add a formulaic allocation of space for these special uses. Subsequent refinement of the space needs assessment can identify these spaces more specifically. Special use activities vary from library to library, according to local service priorities and practices. The definition of special use needs and spaces usually occurs as a minor complement to the library's larger, more central service goals (such as collection and reader seating resources), and by its nature is made on a case by case basis.

4.6 NONASSIGNABLE FUNCTIONS

Nonassignable functions in a building provide necessary support for the primary activities in the building. Nonassignable functions include the building's mechanical systems, restrooms, vertical transportation in a multi-level building (stairs, elevators), and the like. The space needs for these functions are determined by engineering considerations, and local code requirements, among other factors.

4.7 *Space Needs at the Douglas and Glenrock Facilities*

Based on the essential service goals outlined in the preceding discussions, the future space needs of the Douglas and Glenrock can be estimated by applying the space needs assessment methodology described in the previous part of the report.

As a last step before making the estimate of space need, certain of the library-wide resources described above need to be allocated between the two facilities. Specifically, the proposed book holdings, magazine holdings, nonprint holdings, computer network stations for public use, and reader seating need to be distributed among the two facilities.

To do this, a simple, proportionate distribution is suggested. Over the last five or so years, it appears that resource distribution *and use* has divided roughly 70% at the Douglas facility and 30% at the Glenrock facility. Coincidentally, the combined population of those two communities is divided between the two municipalities by roughly the same ratio (the combined population of Douglas and Glenrock is about 7,700, of which about 5,500 – or 71% – reside in Douglas with the remainder residing in Glenrock).

It is suggested that the same ratio continue to be used to distribute collections and resources between these two facilities. Therefore, of the 90,000 volumes to be housed by the Converse County Library, 63,000 should be housed at Douglas and 27,000 should be housed at Glenrock. The proposed magazine inventory should be housed with 98 titles at Douglas and 41 at Glenrock. The

nonprint collection should be housed with 12,600 items at Douglas and 5,400 at Glenrock. There should be 35 computer network stations for public use at Douglas and 15 at Glenrock. There should be 78 reader seats at Douglas and 32 at Glenrock.

4.7.1 Space needs at the Douglas facility

The space needs assessment model described in the previous part of the report can be applied using the inventory of library resources enumerated above for the Douglas facility. The result is summarized in Figure 4(2).

To house a book collection of 63,000 volumes will require 6,300 square feet of floor space at 10 volumes per square foot, 5,478 square feet of floor space at 11.5 volumes per square foot, and 4,846 square feet of floor space at 13 volumes per square foot. Periodical display will require 98 square feet while back files will likewise require 98 square feet. The nonprint collection will require 1,260 square feet of floor space.

Public network computer stations will require 1,750 square feet at 50 square feet per terminal, 1,400 square feet at 40 square feet per terminal, and 1,050 square feet at 30 square feet per terminal.

Reader seating will require 2,340 square feet.

Staff work space will require 3,000 square feet in an optimum setting, 2,750 square feet in a moderate setting, and 2,500 square feet in a minimum setting.

Meeting space allocations include 2,000 square feet for the larger library program room. A children's storytime room will require 575 square feet, while the conference room will require 700 square feet.

Space allocations for staff areas, special use, and nonassignable functions vary depending on how aggressive or generous planners elect to be in the design allowance for an expanded building.

Given these variables, Figure 4(2) summarizes space needs that range from an optimum allocation of 32,558 square feet to a moderate allocation of 27,679 square feet to a minimum allocation of 23,803 square feet.

Obviously, there are any number of alternate results within this overall range. If planners were to pursue a "moderate" allocation for the book collection, but an "optimum" allocation for nonprint, seating, and staff work stations, an "optimum" allocation for meeting room space, but a "moderate" allocation for special use space and nonassignable space, the result would be a blending of the combined "optimum" result and the "moderate" result shown in Figure 4(2) – something between 32,558 square feet and 27,679 square feet.

In fact, based on the consultant's experience and the general scale of the service parameters defined for the Douglas facility, the board and staff are encouraged to consider the following specific allocations for planning purposes:

- a moderate allocation for the book collection acknowledges an interest in providing some degree of marketing display opportunities to promote use of the libraries collections while

FIGURE 4(2)
SPACE NEEDS ESTIMATE / DOUGLAS FACILITY

		SPACE ALLOCATION			
Collection space		Best	Mod	Low	Rec
Books					
Opt: @ 10.0 vol per sq.ft.	63,000	6,300			
Mod: @ 11.5 vol per sq.ft.	63,000		5,478		5,478
Low: @ 13.0 vol per sq.ft.	63,000			4,846	
Periodical display					
@ 1 title per sq.ft.	98	98	98	98	98
Periodical backfiles					
@ 0.5 sq.ft. per title per yr held	98	98	98	98	98
Nonprint					
@ 10 items per square foot	12,600	1,260	1,260	1,260	1,260
Public network stations					
Opt: @ 50 sq.ft. per terminal	35	1,750			
Mod: @ 40 sq.ft. per terminal	35		1,400		1,400
Low: @ 30 sq.ft. per terminal	35			1,050	
Reader seating space					
@ 30 sq.ft. per seat	78	2,340	2,340	2,340	2,340
Staff work space					
Opt: @ 150.0 sq.ft. per station	20	3,000			
Mod: @ 137.5 sq.ft. per station	20		2,750		2,750
Low: @ 125.0 sq.ft. per station	20			2,500	

NOTE: Figure 4(2) continues on next page

FIGURE 4(2) (con't)
SPACE NEEDS ESTIMATE / DOUGLAS FACILITY

			SPACE ALLOCATION			
Meeting room space			Best	Mod	Low	Rec
Program room I						
@ 10.0 sq.ft. per seat + 500 sq.ft.		150	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Storytime room						
@ 15.0 sq.ft. per seat + 50 sq.ft.		35	575	575	575	575
Conference / board room						
@ 30 sq.ft. per seat + 10 gallery		20	700	700	700	700
Special use space						
Opt:	Estimated @ 15.0% of gross area		4,884			4,513
Mod:	Estimated @ 12.5% of gross area			3,460		
Low:	Estimated @ 10.0% of gross area				2,380	
Nonassignable space						
Opt:	@ 27.5% of gross building area		8,954			8,274
Mod:	@ 25.0% of gross building area			6,920		
Low:	@ 22.5% of gross building area				5,356	
	GROSS BUILDING AREA		32,558	27,679	23,803	30,086

also acknowledging that the scale of the proposed collection should enable the library to achieve certain efficiencies in layout in storage and display

- a moderate allocation for public computer network stations acknowledges the ability to achieve some efficiencies of layout,

given the number of stations recommended
- a moderate allocation for staff work stations likewise anticipates the benefit of some economies of scale in the layout of these spaces, given the number of work stations forecast here
- an optimum allocation for special use space sustains for future consideration such features as a public lounge or library café, as well as providing sufficient space for use such as small group study rooms; the more generous allocation for special use space reserves such space
- an optimum allocation for nonassignable space is made, anticipating that the library will expand at the present location and that the resulting design will need to accommodate the inherent inefficiencies that occur when expanding an existing building

As shown in Figure 4(2), this produces an estimate of space need for the Douglas facility of 30,086 square feet. Reflecting the fact that until architectural planning begins in earnest, such figures represent at best a broad estimate, a fairer expression of the library's long-term is space need is 30,000 square feet. The other, more specific figure – 30,086 square feet – infers a level of accuracy that is not present in these forecasts.

This allocation anticipates shelving that would be shorter than the maximum 90" tall – probably averaging around 84" in the adult collection and lower in the children's collection and selected special collections, responding to the human needs of the library environment. The recommended planning allocations would result in a bookstack aisle wider than the bare minimum 36" – surely 42" and possibly as wide as 48".

Note that if the library were to add a second, smaller meeting room to seat 50 at this location, it would add 600 square feet for meeting functions. Associated adjustments would be made to the special use and nonassignable allocations to accommodate this added function, and the recommended gross area of the Douglas building would be 30,600 square feet.

4.7.2 Space needs at the Glenrock facility

The space needs assessment model described in the previous part of the report can be applied using the inventory of essential library resources enumerated above for the Glenrock facility. The result is summarized in Figure 4(3).

To house a book collection of 27,000 volumes will require 2,700 square feet of floor space at 10 volumes per square foot, 2,348 square feet of floor space at 11.5 volumes per square foot, and 2,077 square feet of floor space at 13 volumes per square foot. Periodical display will require 41 square feet while back files will require 41 square feet. The nonprint collection will require 540 square feet of floor space.

Public network computer stations will require 750 square feet at 50 square feet per terminal, 600 square feet at 40 square feet per terminal, and 450 square feet at 30 square feet per terminal.

Reader seating will require 1,350 square feet.

Staff work space will require 1,350 square feet in an optimum setting,

FIGURE 4(3)
SPACE NEEDS ESTIMATE / GLENROCK FACILITY

		SPACE ALLOCATION			
Collection space		Best	Mod	Low	Rec
Books					
Opt: @ 10.0 vol per sq.ft.	27,000	2,700			
Mod: @ 11.5 vol per sq.ft.	27,000		2,348		2,348
Low: @ 13.0 vol per sq.ft.	27,000			2,077	
Periodical display					
@ 1 title per sq.ft.	41	41	41	41	41
Periodical backfiles					
@ 0.5 sq.ft. per title per yr held	41	41	41	41	41
Nonprint					
@ 10 items per square foot	5,400	540	540	540	540
Public network stations					
Opt: @ 50 sq.ft. per terminal	15	750			750
Mod: @ 40 sq.ft. per terminal	15		600		
Low: @ 30 sq.ft. per terminal	15			450	
Reader seating space					
@ 30 sq.ft. per seat	32	960	960	960	960
Staff work space					
Opt: @ 150.0 sq.ft. per station	9	1,350			1,350
Mod: @ 137.5 sq.ft. per station	9		1,238		
Low: @ 125.0 sq.ft. per station	9			1,125	

NOTE: Figure 4(3) continues on next page

FIGURE 4(3) (con't)
SPACE NEEDS ESTIMATE / GLENROCK FACILITY

			SPACE ALLOCATION			
Meeting room space			Best	Mod	Low	Rec
Program room I						
@ 10.0 sq.ft. per seat + 500 sq.ft.		100	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Storytime room						
@ 15.0 sq.ft. per seat + 50 sq.ft.		0	0	0	0	0
Conference / board room						
@ 30 sq.ft. per seat + 10 gallery		15	550	550	550	550
Special use space						
Opt:	Estimated @ 15.0% of gross area		2,200			2,108
Mod:	Estimated @ 12.5% of gross area			1,563		
Low:	Estimated @ 10.0% of gross area				1,079	
Nonassignable space						
Opt:	@ 27.5% of gross building area		4,033			3,864
Mod:	@ 25.0% of gross building area			3,127		
Low:	@ 22.5% of gross building area				2,428	
	GROSS BUILDING AREA		14,664	12,508	10,791	14,052

1,238 square feet in a moderate setting, and 1,125 square feet in a minimum setting.

Meeting space allocations include 1,500 square feet for the library program room. A conference room will require 550 square feet.

Space allocations for staff areas, special use, and nonassignable functions vary depending on how aggressive or generous planners elect to be in the design allowance for an expanded building.

Given these variables, Figure 4(3) summarizes space needs that range from an optimum allocation of 14,644 square feet to a moderate allocation of 12,508 square feet to a minimum allocation of 10,791 square feet.

As with the calculations for the Douglas facility, there are a wide variety of possible results within this overall range, depending on whether the library pursues an "optimum," a "moderate," or a "minimum" allocation for selected elements

Based on the consultant's experience and the general scale of the service parameters defined for the Glenrock facility, the board and staff are encouraged to consider the following specific allocations for planning purposes:

- a moderate allocation for the book collection acknowledges an interest in providing some degree of marketing display opportunities to promote use of the libraries collections while also acknowledging that the scale of the proposed collection should enable the library to achieve certain efficiencies in layout in storage and display
- an optimum allocation for public computer network stations acknowledges that the modest inventory of stations will impede the ability to achieve economies of scale in the layout of this equipment

- an optimum allocation for staff work stations likewise anticipates the likely difficulties in achieving economies of scale in laying out these stations when there are so relatively few stations planned
- an optimum allocation for special use space sustains for future consideration such features as a public lounge or library café, as well as providing sufficient space for use such as small group study rooms; the more generous allocation for special use space reserves such space
- an optimum allocation for nonassignable space is made, anticipating that the library will expand at the present location and need to accommodate the inherent inefficiencies that occur when expanding an existing building

As shown in Figure 4(3), this produces an estimate of space need for the Glenrock facility of 14,052 square feet. Reflecting the fact that until architectural planning begins in earnest, such figures represent at best a broad estimate, a fairer expression of the library's long-term is space need is 14,000 square feet. Again, the other, more specific figure infers a level of accuracy that is not present in these forecasts.

As with the Douglas facility, this allocation anticipates shelving that would be shorter than the maximum 90" tall – probably averaging around 84" in the adult collection and lower in the children's collection and selected special collections, responding to the human needs of the library environment. The recommended planning allocations would result in a bookstack aisle wider than the bare minimum 36" – surely 42" and possibly as wide as 48".

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5 *STRATEGIC PLANNING ISSUES & CONSIDERATIONS*

With the definition of service parameters and space needs in the various alternatives, an informed comparison and assessment of the alternatives can be undertaken. Strategic planning considerations begin to emerge from this comparison. The issues discussed here include

- 5.1 Expansion strategies
- 5.2 Capital cost considerations
- 5.3 Site selection issues
- 5.4 Interim space use strategies
- 5.5 Other issues

5.1 EXPANSION STRATEGIES

There are three general strategies available to any library contemplating a need for expanded space. A library can build new, or build onto the existing building, or a library can convert some existing structure into a new use as a library. Another factor that can come into play in considering expansion strategies is whether to configure the expansion in stages or phases or build to meet the long-term needs all at once.

5.1.1 New construction

New construction is an attractive option for meeting the library's long-term needs. The advantages to new construction at either of the library's two locations are many and clear. The structure itself would be new, and in optimum condition throughout. Mechanical systems, likewise, would be new. The heating and cooling plant could take advantage of the latest in energy efficient technologies. Plumbing systems would also be new and at least initially subject to fewer maintenance demands. Perhaps most importantly, given the increasing emphasis placed on nontraditional information sources in libraries today, the electrical system could be designed from the outset with the flexible, changing needs of a modern library in mind. As part of the electrical system, planners could provide for effective data transmission throughout the facility in order to better implement the library's commitment to automated services.

With new construction, interior space could be designed for maximum utility. The interrelationships among functional areas and departments should

meet the library's optimum specifications. All provisions for handicapped accessibility mandated under the Americans with Disabilities Act could be met readily. Interim conditions during construction would subject the public to the least amount of disruptions, affecting services only when the library closed to move to the new facility.

An important consideration regarding new construction at either of the library's two locations would be site selection. Site selection considerations are discussed in more detail in a subsequent part of this report.

If a new building is the preferred expansion strategy, planners will need to consider the disposition of the existing building. With the construction of a new building, the existing building will be vacated, and an alternate use should be found for that building. The most likely and compatible alternate use would be another public service, possibly a county office or agency, given the fact that the courthouse square defines a geographic space in the city for public functions and services. If there is no suitable public service that could occupy the library's building, a private use could be considered. Alternately, if no suitable alternate use can be found, the building may need to be razed.

Greater capital cost could be another hurdle to new construction. Depending on the degree to which alternate expansion strategies could incorporate an existing space into the finished project, it's possible that an addition would cost less than a new building. If that is so, however, the cost differential between an addition and new construction can be considered the price of obtaining a design of optimum efficiency.

5.1.2 Adding onto the existing building

Structurally, any addition begins with the existing building and must integrate with that building. The entire building would need to be examined for code compliance and all deficiencies remedied. The mechanical systems in the existing building must be assessed, and upgraded if needed and feasible. A crucial issue for the design engineers to explore would be whether to expand the existing mechanical system that serves the library and the other municipal offices in its building or create a new system, separate from the shared system used in the existing building. Likewise, the existing plumbing system must be evaluated and updated. And the power distribution and data transmission systems must be upgraded and integrated into a unified whole.

At Douglas, the effectiveness of an addition strategy would be conditioned by two important factors: the number of levels the expanded building would occupy, and the overall utility of the existing lower level space.

Theoretically, the Douglas building – at a proposed 30,000 square feet – could be designed over multiple levels. A broad rule of thumb for public library building planning suggests that a building of less than 20,000 square feet can be operated more effectively if it is designed and built on a single level, while a building of more than 40,000 square feet will probably prefer a multi-level configuration. A building of 20,000 to 40,000 square feet could function effectively in either a single-level or multi-level configuration.

The public service space in a smaller building of up to 20,000 square feet, if effectively designed, can be supervised and supported from a single desk or

control point. If a smaller building were designed over two levels, it would likely impose a need for increased staff, with significant additional operating costs over the life of the building. A larger library, by contrast, will likely already have in place a departmentalized organizational structure. Dividing a larger library onto multiple levels would not impose additional operational costs because staffing to support multiple service desks would likely already be in place.

The logic supporting multi-level design for a building of more than 40,000 square feet is further bolstered by the fact that in northern climates, there can be a cost-efficiency to building up rather than building out. At somewhere around 40,000 square feet, the added costs imposed by building up – elevators, stairwells, etc. – are more or less offset by the savings of not building out – and incurring the costs of roofs engineered to bear snow loads. Furthermore, there is evidence that humans suffer an increased tendency to get lost in a larger space, so subdividing a large building into smaller floors can help keep the orientation of users of that space.

In any case, at 30,000 square feet, the Douglas facility *could* certainly be configured over multiple levels.

The question would remain, however, as to whether the existing lower level space can be effectively incorporated into the design of an expanded building. It's well beyond the scope of this study to answer that question, but it is clear that questions of access to and illumination of that space would loom large.

Presently, no effective path of access to and from the lower level exists, certainly not from the standpoint of making that space available for any public

use. An elevator would need to be installed, and a new stairway connecting the two levels put in place. (Note that the existing library was designed with a portion of the floor near the entry that could be opened up for just such a stair.) The potential flow of people and materials from level to level would have to be carefully examined to insure that it is clear and logical and that it does not compromise library security.

Lighting the lower level would pose another design challenge. The lower level is, after all, a basement at present. If it were put to any human use – either staff work space or a public service area – the quality of the lighting in that space would need to be dramatically improved. Light wells may need to be introduced around the perimeter of the building to bring natural light onto the lower level. These matters certainly can be resolved, but they introduce additional levels of complexity to resolve.

The existing building at Douglas offers roughly 9,850 square feet – about 6,570 on the entry level and 3,280 on the lower level. Assuming the lower level space could *not* be effectively incorporated into an expanded building, the addition would need to be 24,500 square feet in area. If a single-level addition were placed along the rear of the present building, it would need to extend more than 200' beyond the existing rear wall. The north wall of the library measures 120', and to secure the necessary 24,500 square feet of area in the addition, the new space would need to extend 204' back. This is *well* beyond the library's current property line.

More over, such an addition would displace the library's existing parking, obligating the library to acquire that much more land to fashion the necessary

expanded parking. A single level expansion would probably create too great an imposition at the present site.

A two-level addition would stack the library's expansion vertically, reducing the horizontal spread required. If the lower level space could be incorporated into that expansion, the addition would require about 20,100 of building area. From an operational standpoint, the most effective configuration of a two-level expansion would be one that could expand both the entry and lower levels. Another option would be to extend the entry level and build additional space above, but this would create a more cumbersome, three-level configuration – the expanded entry level, plus the existing lower level, plus the new upper level built over the expansion.

Assuming a two-level addition could be configured effectively over two levels of equal size, the *minimum* required floorplate would be 10,050 square feet. Were such an addition placed along the full length of the back wall of the present library, it would still extend more than 80' back, slightly beyond the existing rear property line.

Apparently, the only way to "fit" an expanded library on the existing property would be to fashion a three-level expansion – expanding both the entry and lower levels *and* building a new upper level above. Such a three-level configuration could possibly support an effective internal organization, but it is by no means guaranteed that the library's functions could be fit into the resulting internal spaces. Careful consideration would be given to defining the upper level as a staff-only work zone in order to limit general public access to just two levels.

Assuming a three-level addition could be configured effectively over three floors of equal size, the *minimum* required floorplate would be 6,700 square feet. Were such an addition placed along the full length of the back wall of the present library, it would extend not quite 60' back. The existing building measures 60'. An addition in this form would roughly double the building's footprint on the present site. And note that the addition would again displace current on-site parking.

At Glenrock, conditions are different. The existing building offers a gross area of about 3,800 square feet – 3,000 square feet on the entry level, and the balance in a small basement at the rear of the building. Given the facility's long-term need of 14,000 square feet, a single-level configuration would be preferred. To gain some sense of the scale of that building, consider placing an addition of the same scale as the existing building on either side of the existing building. This would largely fill the existing site and produce a building of just 10,000 square feet. As at the Douglas site, an expansion would displace parking, obligating the library to find a new solution for any necessary on-site parking.

5.1.3 Converting an existing structure into a new library

Another option is to convert an existing structure into a new use as a library. Note, however, that a library is a complex and unique structural type. Many factors should be considered before an existing building can be deemed suitable for conversion. Most of these factors can be remedied during the renovation and rehabilitation of an existing structure, albeit sometimes at considerable expense. Obviously, the degree to which these concerns are already met in an existing building will reduce the trouble and expense needed to

accomplish a conversion. Other factors to consider regarding conversion of an existing structure are outlined in Appendix D.

It was beyond the scope of this study to examine specific opportunities for conversion. Note, however, that in Glenrock a suggestion has been raised to move the library into the school building a block away. The school building will be vacated in favor of a new school building to be completed soon, and that existing structure has been proposed as a joint-use civic building which would incorporate an expanded library.

Specifically, it has been suggested that the Glenrock library be moved into space in that building presently occupied by the library and some adjacent classrooms. This needs assessment can now be used to compare the available space in the school building against the needs of the library. Meanwhile, it can be said that the proposed space is largely (though not entirely) open and free of obstructions. Certainly is it far less subdivided than a traditional school structure; there's no long series of small classrooms interrupting the internal flow of space. This general openness would work to the library's advantage. It's possible that the broad extant divisions in the current design of the space might naturally support the broad functional divisions that are likely to be needed in a public library – a fiction collection, a nonfiction collection, an audiovisual collection, a children's collection, and so on. There's also a certain drama to the space, with the high, sloping ceiling. This option certainly merits closer examination.

5.1.4 Construction in phases

It may not be feasible at the present time to pursue the construction of

expanded buildings that are substantially larger than either of the library's existing buildings. Although a clear need over the next 20+ years for a building of that size is documented here, cost factors and concerns over voter acceptance of a project of that size may prompt consideration of a smaller initial structure.

The size and scale of that initial phase should be determined in collaboration with a consulting librarian and an architect. That smaller initial structure would certainly be designed to accept a later addition. The smaller initial structure would be configured on its site in order to accept a later addition.

The anticipated cost, along with the board's perception of what in the public's mind would be an acceptable cost, would clearly be an important factor in determining the scale of a first phase.

Still, as shown in the preceding sections of this report, the size of the building determines the kinds of inventories and services that a library can support (and vice versa), and the board and staff would need to take into consideration the range of service goals that could be supported by a phase one building of a given size. The service parameters that can be supported by the phase one expansion should be meaningful.

From the standpoint of the library's service parameters, a starting point for considering the size of a phase one expansion might be to consider the library's *existing* space needs – that is to say, how much space *should* the library provide to adequately house the services and resources it presently happens to offer today? To that, one could add any necessary allocation to support resources and services that the library *should* provide today but cannot for want of sufficient space. That

calculation of the library's current, immediate space need will be somewhat less than the long-range forecast made in this report. A first phase of construction should fall somewhere between the existing space need and the library's future space need – ideally, no less than mid-way between those two points.

The size of the initial construction would also affect another strategic factor: the period of growth to be supported by the first phase. If an initial phase is undersized the library will soon outgrow it and be forced to approach the voters to finance the addition before those voters are ready and willing to approve another major capital expense for the library.

The cost assigned to phase one and the board's perception of the public's view of an "acceptable" cost would also factor into the decision to build into phase one some unfinished space to house a future expansion. Obviously, that creates a more costly project than one that foregoes entirely any such accommodation for future growth.

One advantage of phased construction is that the library has a second opportunity to reconsider and possibly redirect its long-range service goals when it comes time to place the addition on the building.

A potential disadvantage to phased construction is that the second phase may never come to pass. Local political conditions may change, an addition may not be feasible. The library would then be forced to live with the smaller, more constrained building. (One advantage of "shelling out" unfinished space during a phase one project is that the library secures access to space for future expansion should those local political conditions change.)

Another disadvantage to phased construction is increased total project costs. If a phased approach to new construction is pursued, the library will realize an initial savings in construction cost because the initial phase would be planned at a smaller scale than the full build-out. The subsequent addition, however, would increase the cost of the completed building in excess of the cost of constructing the full build-out immediately, owing to the inflation of construction costs during the interval between the initial construction and the phase-two addition and owing to the likely need to perform some degree of renovation and remodeling on the structure built in the initial stage.

Clearly, if a phased approach to new construction is pursued, site selection should be made in consideration of the library's *long-term space* needs for both the structure and any required on-site parking, even though that full amount of land wouldn't be needed to support the smaller phase-one structure. The initial construction should be carefully placed on the site in order to preserve the highest degree of flexibility in placing and designing the subsequent addition.

5.2 CAPITAL COST CONSIDERATIONS

As the library considers any expansion project, construction and operating costs must be kept in mind. This section of the report discusses cost models for making a preliminary estimate of construction costs for a new building. At this time, without specific plans in hand, capital costs for this proposal can only be estimated broadly.

There are several elements that are commonly considered in deriving construction cost estimates at this early stage in the planning process for a capital improvement project: site acquisition, new construction costs, remodeling costs, costs for fixed equipment, site development, furniture and equipment, professional fees, miscellaneous costs, contingencies, and special costs. The basis for cost estimating for each of these aspects will be described here, and with this discussion in hand, library board and staff can construct an estimate of potential project costs once as expansion strategies are narrowed down.

5.2.1 Site acquisition

Given the apparent limitations at both of the library's present sites, it seems likely that site acquisition will need to be part of an overall project budget. If the library pursues an addition to either building, it's likely that additional property adjacent to the current site will need to be secured. If the library pursues new construction, site acquisition becomes an obvious factor. Likewise, if the library should seek to convert an existing building to a new use as a library, that existing building will have to be acquired.

The best measure for making an initial budget allocation for site acquisition is to consider the realities of the local real estate market and fashion an reasonable allowance.

5.2.2 New construction

Costs for construction are calculated on an average per square foot of new construction. Typically, library construction projects seek to achieve a moderate level of quality in the finish work in the new building, neither showy and ostentatious, nor cheap. Costs for current public library construction projects in Wyoming are estimated here at $160 per square foot. This estimate is drawn from the recent bid experience of the Laramie County Library System, which is preparing to break ground for a new building in Cheyenne.

Any cost basis per square foot should also take into account an inflation factor, since the cost per square foot is a *current* estimate and that Converse County will be bidding its project(s) at some later date. In considering that inflation factor, be aware that the construction market is a specialized segment of the broader national economy and often exhibits inflation rates that are notably different from the general consumer or producer price indexes. The pending large-scale reconstruction efforts that are being undertaken in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, for example, might very easily place pressures on the construction materials market and drive up prices at a faster rate.

5.2.3 Remodeling costs

Remodeling costs will vary, depending on the nature and extent of the

remodeling proposed. In a new construction cost model, remodeling costs do not apply. In consideration of the condition of the existing buildings and in consideration of the scale of that building compared to the scale of the library's overall needs, however, it is likely that substantial remodeling in the existing building would be needed. Any applicable remodeling costs should be estimated at 75% of new construction costs, or $120 per square foot.

5.2.4 Special construction

Special construction allows for building features that may be out of the ordinary for the scope of the project. Such features could include the development of an atrium at the entry to the building, or the provision of parking beneath the structure itself on a crowded, downtown, urban site, or the installation of an elevator in a smaller structure that is forced by site constraints into a multi-level configuration. Special costs typically can best be estimated when a specific plan is in hand. Without a plan in hand, no allocations for special construction be made in either the estimate for new construction or for an addition.

5.2.5 Furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E)

Over the past five years, furnishings costs for library construction projects reported annually to *Library Journal* have averaged 15% of construction costs (new construction plus remodeling plus special construction costs). Based on an construction cost estimate of $160 per square foot, this would recommend an allowance of about $24 per square foot. Note that the actual costs can be somewhat higher or somewhat lower depending on whether the library chooses to

select furnishings from a high-end manufacturer or from a more modest line. The estimate can also vary depending on whether the library intends to port over any of its existing furnishings into the new or expanded space or if it's going to acquire all new furnishings.

5.2.6 Technology

As a library occupies its expanded building, it is an opportunity to upgrade any existing computer hardware that may be in place or install new hardware at new locations. An existing automated circulation system may need to be expanded to support terminals added during the course of the project, and the cost of those new terminals can be included in the overall project budget, as a special subset of furniture and equipment costs. In a preliminary budget like this one, allow at least $50,000 for technology costs. Consider a higher allocation if the library wishes to consider including the entire cost of a major upgrade to its automated circulation system and catalog in its capital budget.

5.2.7 Professional fees

The largest share of professional fees paid on any library construction project are for architectural and engineering (A&E) services. These services may be complemented by a variety of other professional services, including legal services, building consulting, interior design services, and so on. The greatest share of the total professional fees will be paid to architects, however and the basis of estimating those costs becomes the basis for estimating professional fees in general. A&E fees are commonly calculated as a percentage of the project construction cost. The percentage charged by an architect will vary anywhere

from 6% to 12% and more, depending on the size of the project (a larger project will be assessed a smaller percentage fee), and the type of project (a new building will be assessed a smaller percentage fee while an addition or a renovation will be assessed a higher fee).

5.2.8 Other fees and miscellaneous expenses

The project is likely to incur other miscellaneous costs, for publishing certain legal notices, or printing the plans and bid specifications, or conducting soils testing and other quality control tests, or hiring a clerk of the works to provide additional construction monitoring, and so on. Allow between 1% and 2% of construction costs for miscellaneous expenses.

5.2.9 Contingencies

Any construction project budget should include an allocation for unforeseen costs. That allocation is commonly established somewhere between 3% and 5% of construction costs. At this early stage in the planning, an even higher rate for contingencies – up to 10% of construction costs – is not unusual, and often considered to be more prudent. Contingencies for projects that involve existing structures are typically set at a higher rate than contingencies for new construction because dealing with any existing structure introduces more unknowns into the planning environment. For new construction, allow contingencies at lease 8.00% of construction costs. For an addition, allow contingencies at least 10.00% of construction costs.

5.2.10 Offsetting revenue / sale of the existing building

For new construction, project costs could be offset by the sale of the current site and building. It is unknown whether there is a market for the existing building and what that market would bring.

5.3 SITE SELECTION ISSUES

The importance of site selection for a public library cannot be diminished. Some library space planners argue it is more important to obtain a good site than it is to build a bigger and bigger building. A well-chosen site will contribute to the use of the building, sometimes even to the point of overcoming some shortcomings in a poorly-designed building. But if the site is poorly chosen, even a sterling design – comfortable, welcoming, and efficient though it may be – will not reach its potential.

Site selection should be undertaken in the context of the library's long-term service goals and space needs, even though the library may pursue a smaller initial project as part of a two-phase expansion project which would reduce its immediate site needs. Any site selected should be able to accommodate the library's long-term space needs.

A number of available studies provide direction regarding the selection of a public library site.[1] The conventional wisdom advises that public libraries are most successfully sited in areas of high pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Public libraries typically benefit from the same bustle and convenience that motivates businesses and commercial / retail uses in a community to concentrate in a central business district and other centers or areas specifically zoned for such uses. A commercial area, for example, is usually heavily traveled and therefore highly visible; the surrounding businesses allow library users the convenience of combining several errands on a single trip.

Based on the findings in the literature on public library site selection, LPA recommends twelve vital criteria for the evaluation of any proposed site. These should be applied to any site considered for new construction. They should also be applied to the location of any existing structure that may be proposed for conversion into a library. They should also be applied to the existing site to determine the adequacy of that site. These criteria may be reviewed and accepted by the library board and staff. Or some of these twelve criteria may be rejected. Still others may be suggested by the library board or staff.

5.3.1 Site size

This reflects the suitability of the site to support the proposed construction, plus on-site parking, plus landscaping and set-backs. The ability to support further expansion at a later date should not be ignored. The library's space needs and possible configurations to meet those needs determine reasonable parameters for overall building size and the likely floor plate size, which in turn will have an impact on site size. Favored conditions for this criterion will allow the site to support the building itself, on-site parking, landscaping and room for future expansion. Less favored conditions involve a site so small as to restrict future growth, or the ability to provide on-site parking. Conversely, too large a site may be detrimental as well, involving the purchase of more property than is needed, possibly at a cost that is greater than needed.

Building floor plate: The building itself will occupy a certain amount of property, dictated by the size of the building floor plate, which in turn is determined by the number of stories used in the expanded building. The broad rule of thumb regarding multi-level construction discussed

previously comes into play again.

At 30,000 square feet, the Douglas facility could be designed as a single-level building or as a multi-level building. In a single-level configuration, the building floor plate would require 30,000 square feet. In a two-level configuration, the floor plate would require 15,000 square feet if the gross area could reasonably be divided evenly over two levels. Except that an equal division is unlikely, given common patterns of organizing public library services and space. If the space were divided 60% : 40% or 66% : 33% between two levels, the building floor plate at Douglas would range between 18,000 and 20,000 square feet.

At 14,000 square feet, the Glenrock building would strongly prefer a single-level design, and the floor plate would require 14,000 square feet there.

On-site parking: Local zoning codes take precedence regarding parking requirements. Many local codes are non-specific with regard to a library use, prompting a need for a special determination by local zoning officials. Until a determination is made, an allocation for on-site parking can be made based the observation that most communities that *do* specify a requirement for a library use state that a library needs between three and four parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross building area. A common allocation of space per parking place is 250 square feet.

At Douglas, this formula produces a recommendation of between 90 parking spaces (requiring 22,500 square feet of site) and 120 parking spaces (requiring 30,000 square feet of site).

At Glenrock, the formula recommends between 42 parking spaces (requiring 10,500 square feet of site) and 56 parking spaces (requiring

14,000 square feet of site).

Landscaping / setbacks / easements: It is often recommended that one-half of the property be reserved for landscaping, setbacks, and easements. This can be estimated by adding together the allowance for the building floor plate and the allowance for on-site parking. In this case, noting that the local landscape doesn't readily support lush landscaping – and that water conservation concerns can even mitigate against extensive planting – this conventional recommendation may be reasonably scaled back. In this case, for planning purposes, consider an allocation equal to 75% of the conventional recommendation.

At Douglas, with a single-level configuration, this allocation will be determined by whether the library provides the minimum or maximum number of parking spaces. A building floor plate of 30,000 square feet, plus 22,500 square feet of property to support 90 parking spaces, produces an allocation of 39,375 square feet for landscaping, easements, and setbacks. The larger allocation to support 120 cars produces an allocation of 45,000 square feet for landscaping, easements, and setbacks.

In a two level configuration, this allocation hinges on the size of the building footprint *and* the number of parking spaces, and ranges from 30,375 square feet to 37,500 square feet.

At Glenrock, an allocation for landscaping, easements, and setbacks ranges between 18,375 square feet and 21,000 square feet, depending on the number of parking spaces provided.

Future expansion: Under ideal conditions, the library's site will also accommodate future expansion. Depending on the configuration of the

original construction and the scope of the addition, an addition may further expand the footprint of the building on the site. An addition will definitely expand the library's on-site parking needs.

Exclusive of any additional property that would be needed to support a future addition to the library, site requirements at Douglas for a single-level configuration range from 91,875 square feet of property (about 2.0 acres) to 105,000 square feet (2.3 acres), depending on the number of parking places provided. In a two-level configuration at Douglas, the site requirements range from 70,875 square feet (about 1.6 acres) to 87,500 square feet (1.9 acres), depending on the size of the building floor plate and the number of parking spaces provided. At Glenrock, a single-level configuration will produce a site size requirement of between 42,875 square feet (a little under 1.0 acre) and 49,000 square feet (almost 1.1 acres), depending on the number of parking spaces provided.

These estimates, of course, can be modified depending on the particulars of a given site and depending on how much leeway planners want to allow themselves in terms of future expansion, greenspace and landscaping, and so on Figure 5(1) on the following page summarizes these estimated site size requirements.

5.3.2. Central location

A central location refers to the general convenience of access by different segments of the community. Is a proposed site convenient to population, employment, and retail centers? This criterion may be considered a summary or

FIGURE 5(1)
SITE SIZE SUMMARY

DOUGLAS / single-level configuration	Low		High	
Gross building area		30,000		30,000
Building floor plate		30,000		30,000
On-site parking (# / area needed)	90	22,500	120	30,000
Landscaping / easements / setbacks		39,375		45,000
TOTAL		**91,875**		**105,000**

DOUGLAS / two-level configuration	Low		High	
Gross building area		30,000		30,000
Building floor plate		18,000		20,000
On-site parking (# / area needed)	90	22,500	120	30,000
Landscaping / easements / setbacks		30,375		37,500
TOTAL		**70,875**		**87,500**

GLENROCK / single-level configuration	Low		High	
Gross building area		14,000		14,000
Building floor plate		14,000		14,000
On-site parking (# / area needed)	42	10,500	56	14,000
Landscaping / easements / setbacks		18,375		21,000
TOTAL		**42,875**		**49,000**

broad overview of others that follow relating to accessibility and convenience ("vehicular access" and "pedestrian access" to name two).

5.3.3 Cost / availability

This balances the cost of the property in question and the ability of the library to acquire the property. The total cost of the property is one aspect of this criterion, and its cost per square foot is another. Acquisition costs, however, cannot be examined solely in absolute terms (that is, which site is least expensive, which is next least expensive, and so on), but should also be evaluated in terms of whether the acquisition costs are fair and reasonable. A more costly, but otherwise well-situated, site will be well worth some measure of added cost; a poorly situated site is not a bargain, no matter what the price.

The number of parcels involved in assembling the site can be a factor affecting a property's availability, with fewer parcels typically favored over many. Likewise, the number of current owners is a factor, with fewer owners typically favored over many. Obviously, the fewer parcels or owners to involve in the negotiations, the simpler and the more direct the negotiations should be. The displacement of current residences and commercial and / or other uses is a factor; payment of relocation expenses for current owners may be required under state or federal regulations. The current owners' willingness to sell is perhaps the crucial consideration; sites that could require the exercise of eminent domain are less desirable. Ease of acquisition is at least of equal, if not greater, standing with the straight cost of the property.

5.3.4 Potential for visibility

One recalls the saying, "Out of sight, out of mind." A location with high visibility will help keep the library in the forefront of the community. Usually,

visibility and general accessibility are closely related. A site located on an arterial street, with nearby vehicular and pedestrian traffic, will be a visible one. This criterion also speaks to the image that will be projected at a particular site. This in turn can be conditioned by adjacent uses and the surrounding neighborhood.

5.3.5 Adjacent services / uses

The nature, compatibility, and proximity of surrounding uses. Are the neighboring properties supporting uses and usage patterns that are compatible with those that will be created by the library? What is the schedule or cycle of activities that exists around the present site? Are neighboring properties occupied by entities that will help attract library users to the area during hours the library is open? Are there times when the library, if located at the site in question, would become a sole destination point for users?

5.3.6 Vehicular access

In most parts of the country, people continue to rely on the automobile for transportation. In such communities, it is important that the site be one that can be reached readily by car. That often translates into a site found on an arterial street. Vehicular access should also consider mass transit options. Preferred sites are those on existing public transit routes (if the community supports mass transit). Typically, the further removed a site is from arterial streets or existing public transit routes, the less favorable it is.

5.3.7 Access to parking

Issues relating to vehicular access also affect a library's need to provide parking on site or nearby. People not only continue to prefer to drive their own cars to work, or to school, or to stores or on other errands, they prefer to park their cars as close to their destination as possible. One noted librarian has observed, "It's far better to build a $2 million parking lot next to a $20,000 building than the other way around," and there's a certain truth to that. Many local zoning codes reflect this by requiring an increasing number of on-site parking for most uses, libraries included. Sites are preferred that will support current code requirements for parking on-site. Consideration can be given to existing parking that may be adjacent to a site in question. Consideration can also be given to opportunities to develop sufficient parking jointly with neighboring uses.

5.3.8 Pedestrian access

Pedestrian access has two dimensions – ease and desirability of access to and from surrounding uses, and ease and safety of access on foot and by bicycle for student use. There is a natural tension that exists between this criterion and "vehicular access." While the latter requires a location on an arterial street, arterials are not always favored by pedestrians or cyclists for safety's sake. Under this criterion, sites would be examined to determine the degree to which there are populations in the vicinity that are likely to reach the library by foot or bicycle and whether those individuals would need to use main streets to reach the library. In many communities, reliance on the autos (and, to a lesser degree, buses) is minimizing the importance of pedestrian access.

5.3.9 Topography / existing conditions

This includes the general lay of the land (flat vs. sloping), the impact of any existing structures or uses on the property, and the potential for converting any existing buildings that may exist on the proposed site. It also accounts for any *known* "unseen" conditions (easements, subsurface conditions).

5.3.10 Property shape

A simple shape – a square or rectangle – is preferred for its ease of use in designing an expanded building. An irregularly-shaped lot can present limitations that will compromise a design's effectiveness. A long and narrow site will often be reflected in an inefficient, long and narrow design. The impact of an irregularly-shaped site can be mitigated if it is large enough to allow a variety of building placements on the property.

5.3.11 Utilities

Are utilities – including water, sewer, electric, telephone – delivered to the site in question, or will it be necessary to bring basic utility services to the site?

5.3.12 Zoning

This criterion asks first whether a public library is a permitted use according to the current zoning of the property in question. There may be other limitations or restrictions in the zoning code generally or in the code as it pertains to a particular property, issues like front, side and rear set-backs, height

restrictions, or restrictions regarding the proportion of land that can be "built." Variances can be sought for any restrictions that may apply, and in most municipalities the variation will be granted, but it is nevertheless easier to implement the building program if the existing zoning will support the library's plans.

5.4 INTERIM SPACE USE STRATEGIES

As part of this study, the current layout of the library was examined in an effort to improve the functionality and utility of that space. Frankly, both of the library's buildings are fairly small and both are filled up to, if not well beyond, their working capacity. Neither building offers any currently under-utilized spaces that might be captured and put to some higher purpose.

The Douglas facility does have its lower level, and that space represents an area that is arguably underutilized, but to incorporate it more fully into the day-to-day operation of the library would require substantial physical remodeling and considerable cost. An elevator would need to be installed. New stairs would need to be located, designed, and installed. Given the proposed location for such a stairway shown on the plans for the Douglas facility, the circulation desk would need to be relocated and reconfigured in order to create a suitable point of supervision for people moving up and down those stairs. In light of the pending expansion projects for the library, the expenditure of time and effort and money is called into question.

Sketches of the current buildings and furnishings layouts are provided in Appendix E.

There is one reconfiguration strategy to consider, however.

At the Douglas facility, the nonfiction collection is split into two parts of the building. The front part of the classified Dewey sequence is housed in the

room immediately to the patron's left as one enters the building – the room that was in the original plan for the Douglas building a meeting room. The fiction collection is located at the front end of the main reading room, and the balance of the nonfiction collection is located toward the middle of the space. The children's collection is located at the back of the main reading room.

The separation of the nonfiction collection into two parts produces a potential and needless confusion. When one reaches the end of the Dewey sequence in that front room, there's no clear indication where to resume the classification scheme. It would be arguably better were the nonfiction collection presented in a single, continuous run.

At present there are 352 shelves in 60 shelving units in the front room. Of these shelves, the nonfiction collection occupies 263 shelves, with 89 shelves vacant (the result of the library's continuing weeding efforts).

This inventory of nonfiction shelving corresponds to the current shelving inventory for fiction and large print materials. These two collections occupy 342 shelves. This suggests that these subsets of the library's collections could be conveniently swapped out, moving the fiction and large print collections into the front room and the nonfiction onto the current fiction and large print shelving. This would bring the two parts of the nonfiction collection into a closer proximity and alleviate the potential for confusion in the shelving sequence.

Although this represents a prospective improvement in the arrangement of space at the Douglas facility, it should be noted that the shifting of more than one-half of the print collection represents a considerable effort. Depending on the

timetable for addressing the library's larger space needs, it may not be worth the expenditure of effort. As the recommendations of this study are explored with the library's public and with other local officials, if it appears that the library will be able to move forward with planning for the needed expansions, it will be the better choice to turn the library's collective energies toward advancing those projects. If expansions prove to be truly a long-term goal, it becomes more and more feasible to consider a major interim project like this.

5.5 OTHER ISSUES

5.5.1 Architectural involvement

The basic findings of this report define an inventory of future library resource goals that the library should plan to accommodate and calculates the corresponding space need. Various options to meet those needs have been described. All of this information will provide a foundation for a decision that is yet to be made.

The library board and staff may find it useful to complement the essential information from this study with an analysis of the library's current facilities and sites conducted from an architectural perspective. The current report has attempted to outline some of the issues that emerge as a result of these basic findings regarding the library's future space needs, but that discussion doesn't necessarily provide a full and complete analysis.

If an architect is retained at this time, a clear scope of work should be defined. Specifically, the library board will need to define whether the architect is being retained (a) to assist with the near-term determination of expansion strategy priorities, or (b) to identify preferred expansion strategies *and* develop architectural plans to address those strategies. The first option clearly involves a limited term working relationship (albeit one that may evolve into a longer term relationship, if the same architect is later chosen to prepare the actual design), while the latter option clearly anticipates a long-term relationship. The difference may be subtle but will affect how both parties approach the relationship.

The literature on library space planning includes a number of excellent sources outlining issues relating to architect selection.[2]

5.5.2 Deferred maintenance

Staff noted various deferred maintenance issues at both facilities. Clearly, as the library determines its preferred strategy for expanding its two facilities, it will become more and more evident how to best address these deferred maintenance issues. If the timetable to implement an expansion solution is expected to be a short one, limited investment in those repairs may be the better choice. If the library anticipates an extended period before the long-term space needs can be resolved, it becomes a better and better choice to make the necessary investments in the current facilities.

5.5.3 Books-by-mail

During the course of discussions for this study, staff expressed an interest in being able to extend improved access to library service to other parts of the county. Recently, residents in Esterbrook, a small community at the south end of the county, established their own informal, volunteer library.

While there is apparent interest in greater service levels in Converse County, staff also acknowledged the cost of providing expanded direct service in the form of a third physical facility.

As an alternative to a formal third branch, staff discussed briefly the possibility of a books-by-mail service, noting that electronic access to the

library's catalog via the Internet can inform patrons in remote parts of the county exactly what's in the collection and what's available for loan. This capability could be matched with a messaging system that would allow patrons to request items from the collection. This process would be similar to the hold / reserve process whereby patrons can request a book or nonprint items that will then be held for them at the desk for pick-up, except that in this case staff would retrieve the item and then package it for delivery to the patron by mail.

Clearly, before initiating a service like this, staff would need to consider the likely volume of activity and determine whether that added activity could be assumed within current staffing levels. The volume of activity would also translate directly into added postage costs. The matter of whether to charge a fee for the service and what that fee should be, if charged, should be determined.

The staff and board would also need to resolve how to address returns:

- A prepaid mailer – such as that employed by a commercial service like Netflix – may not be an effective option in this case because of the variability of library books and other items. Nearly all Netflix deliveries are of a consistent size and weight, which means that return mailers can be interchanged without any complication. That is not at all the case with material that might be delivered by the library, and patrons would need to be sure to keep the proper return mailer with each particular item.

- Alternately, the library could adopt a policy that the service is a "one-way" service. The library will deliver the item to the patron,

but it is the patron's responsibility to return it, either in person or by mail (with the patron paying the return postage).

- In a variation on the latter scenario, the library could facilitate the patron's return responsibilities by developing remote return locations in the smaller communities in the county. These remote return locations would be more convenient for the patron. Library staff would travel to these locations on a regular schedule (once a week? twice a week? daily?) to retrieve items that patrons have returned.

A books-by-mail service may also introduce a need for additional staff work space to organize shipments and support the service. If so, the space allocations described previously would need to be adjusted accordingly.

5.6 ENDNOTES

[1] The literature on public library site selection is extensive. For an introduction, note three *Occasional Papers* issued by the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science:

Wheeler, Joseph L. "The effective location of public library buildings." *Occasional Papers*, no. 52 (July 1952).

_____. "A reconsideration of the strategic location for public library buildings." Occasional Papers, no. 85 (July 1967).

Robinson, William C. "The utility of retail site selection for the public library." *Occasional Papers*, no. 122 (March 1976).

Also note a newer treatment on public library site selection:

Koontz, Christine M. *Library Facility Siting and Location Handbook.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997.

[2] Among the resources to be found in the literature on library space planning having to do with architect selection are the following:

McCarthy, Richard C. *Designing Better Libraries: Selecting and Working with Building Professionals*. 2nd ed. Fort Atkinson, WI: Highsmith Press, 2001.

Metcalfe, Keyes D. *Planning Academic and Research Library Buildings*. 3rd ed by Philip D. Leighton and David C. Weber. Chicago, ALA: 2000. Chapter 4: "The Planning Team, with Architects and

Consultants" (pp.71-106).

Rohlf, Robert H. "The selection of an architect." *Public Libraries* 21 (Spring 1982): 5-8.

Smith, David. "Selecting a public library architect." In *Libraries for the future: planning buildings that work*, Ron G. Martin, ed. Chicago, ALA: 1992, pp. 82-86.

6 *SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS*

This report had the following aims: to assess the space needs of the Converse County Library based on its projected holdings and program of service, to explore service delivery strategies, and to outline future service and facilities development issues.

6.1 The library's projected space needs

The Converse County Library presently occupies two buildings – one in Douglas that offers 9,850 square feet of gross area (about 6,570 square feet are available on the entry level for prime library use; the remaining area is lower level storage), and another in Glenrock that offers 3,800 square feet of gross area (3,000 square feet on the entry level, with the balance in a basement). After many years of service to the Converse County community, these facilities have now reached their functional capacity.

A review of the library's essential service and resource inventory goals found that the library should provide a facility sufficient to house the following resources (listed as a combined system-wide inventory, then divided into resources to be held at Douglas and at Glenrock):

	TOTAL	Douglas	Glenrock
Volumes held	90,000	63,000	27,000
Magazine titles	139	98	41
Nonprint held	18,000	12,600	5,400

	TOTAL	Douglas	Glenrock
Public computer terminals	50	35	15
Reader seats	110	78	32
Staff work stations	29	20	9
Meeting / program room to seat		150	100
Storytime room to seat		35	
Conference room to seat		20	15

Applying conventional unit space allowances for all of these resources produces an estimate that the Converse County Library should plan for a building of some 30,000 square feet in Douglas and 14,000 square feet in Glenrock.

As the library looks to its future, it should seek to implement a facilities expansion strategy that will support these essential service goals. This will allow the library to to display its collections in an appealing and convenient manner. It would provide adequate staff work environments, thereby maintaining the staff's effectiveness when serving the public.

6.2 Strategic considerations affecting the library's space needs

Several "theoretical" options exist to meet the library's space needs: the library could build a new building, could add onto the existing buildings, could acquire some existing building to convert to a new use as a library.

With these findings in hand that the Douglas facility should be roughly

30,000 square feet and the Glenrock facility should be roughly 14,000 square feet, the first priority is for the library board and staff to work with other local officials and the service community at large to determine how the library can best go about meeting those needs. Among the specific questions to consider are these:

- Are the existing buildings in Douglas and Glenrock structurally suitable to support an addition of the required scale? If not, can the library pursue new construction on a new site or find an existing building that could reasonably be converted to a new use as a library?
- Are the current sites at Douglas and Glenrock large enough to support an expanded building (and attendant requirements such as on-site parking and landscaping? If not, can adjacent properties be acquired to better support the project's scale?
- If the library elects to pursue new construction at either location, are there suitable sites (as defined by the site selection criteria discussed previously) available for acquisition?
- How does the space in the Glenrock school building compare to the library's stated needs? Does the conversion of that existing space become a viable option to consider?
- What cost factors will drive the community's support for this project? Is there a point at which project costs will diminish community support?

This further examination, possibly completed with the assistance of an architect, is the first priority.

As the library develops plans for an expanded building, the question of phased, or staged, construction might arise. Staged construction may involve building a smaller structure than this needs assessment would suggest with an addition to be placed on the building at a later date, or it may involve building the entire area recommended by this study but with a portion left unfinished and temporarily unused for completion and occupation at a later date. Clearly, the former will realize the greatest phase-one savings in construction cost, but in so doing simply defers a larger cost to the second phase which may make it more difficult to implement that later phase.

Typically, staging strategies are introduced when the library board and staff perceive that the cost of a full-build-out will not secure the approval of funding authorities (which will be granted, in this case, by the voters at referendum). Or staging strategies will be introduced in response to the voters' rejection of the library's first offering at referendum to complete the full build-out.

In any case, staging construction has the appeal of reducing near-term costs (although when the subsequent addition is completed at tomorrow's inflated dollar costs, the total project cost will be greater).

If staging is considered here, the scale of the initial stage of construction becomes a crucial consideration, balancing reduced project cost against a suitable timeframe for occupying the first-stage construction before the subsequent expansion is needed. If the library is overly aggressive in seeking the first-phase cost savings, it will result in a phase-one building that is too small, and too-soon outgrown. The library will have to seek funding for phase two before the

community is likely ready to provide support for that funding.

6.3 The next steps

Beyond the review of this report, the library board and staff must consider several factors, the most important of which is how to advance the project described in these pages. The space needs outlined here are intended to provide a structural envelope that will allow the library to meet its long-term service goals. The needs assessment process whereby the space needs were identified was founded on identifying the broad service goals the library wants to achieve. Service goals and space needs are inextricably linked.

In order to meet the library service goals identified here, a building of roughly 30,000 square feet is needed in Douglas, and a building of 14,000 square feet is needed in Glenrock.

The board and staff need to examine carefully the service goals and space needs outlined in this report, and confirm or adjust the scope of the project. In any case, it is imperative that the board and staff exercise care in this decision, as the facilities planning decisions made today will affect the library well into this new century.

As consensus is reached among the library board and staff regarding the library's long-term service goals and corresponding space needs, the service community should be engaged in a dialog regarding the library's projected needs. This continuing dialog is central to the ultimate success of the library's expansion prospects.

Beyond consensus-building regarding these long-term service goals, the library board and staff must identify the preferred expansion strategy for each location. This report identified three basic options for expansion – building new, building on, or converting an existing building to a new use as a library – and outlined factors that will play into an eventual determination. Now, armed with an understanding of future service goals and space needs, trustees and staff need to evaluate those options and select the best one. This analysis will involve

- an assessment of current conditions at each facility (can these buildings serve as a solid foundation for future expansion?)
- an evaluation of the adequacy of the two sites (can the existing sites support a building of the scale outlined here or must additional adjacent property be acquired to support the library's needs?)
- an assessment of alternate site options (if new construction is the better choice, are appropriate sites available for consideration and at what cost?)
- an estimate of likely construction and project costs
- consideration of whether to approach either expansion project (or both) with a phased or staged strategy

It may be to the library's advantage to engage an architect to support this analysis. If the library elects to initiate architect selection at this time, one of the first issues to address regarding architect selection will be to determine whether the architect selected will be commissioned *only* to conduct the feasibility study, or commissioned as the library's architect-of-record, with whom the library expects to work through the entire expansion process. While there are some

advantages to the former – a clear and limited definition of the scope of study at a time when the prospects and calendar for advancing a larger expansion project remain undetermined – the latter is generally recommended as the preferred course, because of the prospect of developing a continuing professional relationship with the chosen architect and to avoid the possibility of having to bring a new architect up to speed at a later date.

And, as the library determines its preferred strategy for expanding these two buildings, consideration should be given to developing a building program statement. A building program statement will expand upon the data on the library's space needs presented in this report. It is a written, detailed description of the library's spatial and environmental needs, and it serves most importantly as the library's instructions to the architect.

As specific design for expanded facilities begins to emerge from the detailed spatial and service parameters outlined in a building program, a specific cost estimate can be made for each project. At that time, financing mechanisms can be explored fully and the most appropriate strategy put in place.

By way of summary, in light of these observations and findings, Library Planning Associates, Inc. recommends that the Converse County Library:

- **reaffirm the underlying service goals that lead to the space need for an expanded library facility of 30,000 square feet in Douglas and 14,000 square feet in Glenrock;**

- **build consensus within the community regarding the library's**

service goals and space needs and the need to expand the existing buildings or provide new buildings;

- **initiate a feasibility study (possibly with an architect's assistance) to assess the ability of the present buildings and the present sites to support an expansions of the necessary scale and determine the most effective strategy for expansion; and**

- **when ready to proceed to the design of an expanded building, authorize the development of building program statements describing the library's spatial and environmental requirements in the context of two expanded buildings**

Given the projected service goals and space needs of the library, it may seem like an expanded building for the Converse County Library should be a foregone conclusion. But this needs assessment process – and the entire capital planning process – is better informed as a result of this examination, and better as a result of it.

This course of action offers great challenges and opportunities for the library. An expansion project of this nature is a tremendously complex undertaking, one that will require careful attention on the part of everyone involved, one that will shape the library for many years to come. But the advantages clearly outweigh any disadvantages. Most importantly, through an expansion project, the library will be able to provide the basic services and collections its community needs.