

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****June 14, 2011**

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**SUBJECT: LIBRARY SYSTEM MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

The purpose of this Informal Report is to update Council on the status of the Library's System Master Plan.

On June 23, 2009, the Library distributed Informal Report 9072 outlining its intent to update the 2004 Long Range Services Plan. The goals were to re-visit recommended service improvement goals identified in the 2004 plan, evaluate facility needs, and use market segmentation data to recommend strategies to respond to 21<sup>st</sup> century service needs. Two consultants were used in this effort:

1. Buxton Company conducted the market segment analysis of the Library's current and potential customers.
2. Godfrey's Associates conducted a facilities assessment.

A Planning Advisory Committee of library stakeholders evaluated and responded to the consultants' findings and recommendations.

In addition, findings and recommendations for the Central Library were based in part on the results of a three-day charrette involving representatives from Downtown Fort Worth Inc, FWISD, the Library Advisory Board, the Friends of the Fort Worth Public Library, The Fort Worth Public Library Foundation, Tarrant County College, the city's cable studio, and Library staff. Over those three days, the group addressed a series of questions about how the Central Library is and could be used. Godfrey's responded to each charrette session with a selection of alternative floor plans that the group discussed and refined throughout the course of the three-day event.

The draft Plan was published for public review in April 2010. It called for customizing services according to market segmentation data and utilizing technologies such as smart barcodes, automated materials handling systems, and self-service kiosks to improve efficiencies. Facility recommendations included replacing several existing full-service libraries with larger facilities, remodeling several, repurposing one, adding one new facility in far north Fort Worth, and adding several alternative "express" facilities.

Three public meetings were held in April 2010. The Plan was generally praised as being forward-looking and realistic, given the City's current economic situation. However, residents expressed concerns over several specific proposals: closing Meadowbrook, relocating Riverside to a larger facility, replacing the Diamond Hill/Jarvis and Northside branches with one larger facility near NE28th and North Main, not opening a new library in far north Fort Worth until some time after 2016, and redesigning the public service areas of the Central Library. There were also concerns that insufficient time had been provided for the public to review the Plan and supporting documents. Further work on the Plan was postponed, pending the outcome of the FY2010/FY2011 budget process.

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The revised Plan responds to citizen concerns and the City's current budget outlook. Specifically, the revised Plan recommends:

- Customizing services according to market segment data
- Utilizing technology efficiencies
- Adding library service in far north Fort Worth
- Replacing Ridglea, Seminary, Summer Glen, and Wedgwood with larger spaces when funding becomes available
- Remodeling BOLD, COOL (currently in progress), Central, Diamond Hill, East Berry, East Regional, Northside, Riverside, and Southwest Regional
- Repurposing Meadowbrook (currently in progress)
- Providing three express libraries
- Utilizing facility standards
- Ensuring facility replacement plans are developed prior to closure of existing facilities.

Costs for changes to services and technologies will be absorbed as part of the Library's regular operating budget. Estimated costs to implement the facility proposals between 2011 and 2020 are approximately \$53,000,000.00. Funding for these projects could be realized in several ways, including bond elections, grants, and private donations as well as through partnerships and joint use.

The revised Plan will be posted to the Library's Web site in June. A public awareness campaign will promote the Plan through the Library and City Web sites, informational fliers, e-news, and other electronic outlets as well as with the media. A series of five public meetings, listed below, will be held to obtain additional citizen feedback:

- Tuesday, July 5, 6:30pm, Northpark YMCA
- Wednesday, July 7, 6:00pm, RD Evans Community Center
- Monday, July 18, 6:00pm, Diamond Hill Community Center
- Tuesday, July 26, 12:30pm, Southwest Regional Library
- Thursday, August 18, 12:30pm, East Regional Library (Library Advisory Board)

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The final Plan is expected to be presented to the City Council for consideration in September 2011.

Should you have questions or need additional information, please contact Library Director Gleniece Robinson at 817-871-7707.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tom Higgins".

for **Tom Higgins**  
Interim City Manager