

## **Madison Public Library**

### ***Overview***

Future branch libraries will be sited to provide a positive contribution to the immediate and surrounding neighborhoods, be compatible with existing land uses, and become a destination for the larger regional areas. The location will be appealing and convenient to a majority of the people in the targeted service area, and with the environment surrounding the future library. The new site location will be consistent with neighborhood and City plans for the area. Co-location and joint use opportunities with other public, non-profit, and/or private enterprises or developments will be considered, as will donations of land for a new branch library, providing the site meets the criteria herein stated.

At the time of actual construction a new MPL branch library should have a minimum of 10,000 people in the immediate service area and an estimated service area population of at least 20,000 people within ten years of opening. Any new branch site will generally be located no closer than two miles from another MPL branch or area public library unless the site and the area to be served has unusual local traffic patterns, density, or other unique circumstances.

### ***Site Criteria***

The site should be in an area that is, or will be, frequently visited by people residing in the service area, and be close to, or on, primary streets and existing or proposed transit routes. The site should also be a destination for people who regularly travel to, or through, the service area. The site should be highly visible. The site should have the capacity to meet all Americans with Disabilities Act (U.S. Government 1990) requirements, and will be thoroughly vetted for unwelcome hidden obstacles and subsurface conditions. Where possible one public entrance is preferred.

### ***Capacity of Site***

The site should be large enough to accommodate a library facility deemed necessary for the projected population area, at a minimum of 15,000 square feet. A site that allows for single story, street level configuration is preferred because it is cheaper to build and operate. The site must meet code required parking at grade or in a parking structure. The site must have necessary allowances for setback, zoning requirements, delivery entrance and vehicles, and suitable landscaping. The site for a new library building or for a first floor space in an existing facility should provide for a single street level entrance, an open flexible floor plan with a minimum of load bearing walls and/or closely placed columns. The site must also have access to buried fiber optic cables and other appropriate infrastructure that MPL may connect with at a reasonable price.

### ***Type of Structure and Ownership Arrangement***

#### **Most Efficient – Stand-Alone Structure**

As has been shown with the Central Branch and the Monroe Street Branch, stand-alone structures have the lowest impact on the operating budget. Once debt service has been paid off on a stand-alone structure there are very few fees to be paid from the operating budget. MPL also maintains control over mechanical systems and building access. This type of structure also allows the Library to spur economic growth by announcing a future branch, which then in turn will generate interest by the private sector in co-locating near the Library while maintaining appropriate boundaries between public and private enterprise.

### **Next Most Efficient – Condominium Arrangements**

Condominium agreements eliminate the yearly escalations of rent (and the proportionate effect on the operating budget). However, these agreements are less than ideal from a property management perspective. Library branches in condominium arrangements are usually the anchor of the development, yet the Library does not control what happens with the development (e.g., location of signs). In addition, through Common Area Charges (CAM), the Library pays a percentage of the costs involved in modifications to the property. For example, at the Alicia Ashman Branch, the Library is the only condominium owner. That means that the landlord controls about 75% of the property or votes, so even if the Declaration of Condominium agreement is invoked, the Library as a minority owner will rarely win its point on an issue through voting. In short, while MPL avoids rent in condominium structures, it still faces ever rising CAM charges for issues over which it has no control.

### **Least Efficient – Renting**

Rent represents a huge impact on the operating budget. The same argument that causes renters to become homeowners applies to branch facilities. And, as a renter, the Library has very little input on grounds, appearance, upkeep, etc. There are many ways to interpret a lease, and the Library usually ends up on the short side of any argument.

The supposition that a branch is “nimble” in a rented property, e.g., that it can move to a different strip mall as the population service area shifts, is also faulty. Experience has shown that neighborhoods become deeply attached to a branch once it settles upon a location; moving it in the face of neighborhood opposition is nearly impossible.

### ***Regional Cooperation Opportunities & Strategies/Recommendations***

Public libraries have a long history of cooperation and collaboration with each other and with other organizations. In Wisconsin, some of this is required by statute as reflected in Chapter 43. Public libraries offer reciprocal borrowing privileges to patrons from other systems.

Public libraries in Wisconsin are organized into systems. There are currently 17 systems in the state. Madison Public Library serves as the resource library for the South Central Library System (SCLS). SCLS is comprised of 53 member public libraries in Dane, Green, Columbia, Sauk, Adams, Portage and Wood counties and is one of the largest systems. MPL is also the resource library for Dane County.

As the System Resource Library, MPL provides a variety of services to the other libraries. Again, some of this is determined by state statute. For example, MPL provides “back-up reference and interlibrary loan services.” For this service, SCLS pays MPL annually about \$165,000. In addition, as part of a System agreement, MPL purchases and provides access to “specialized materials, materials in demand, and materials for youth.” The annual payment for this service is \$145,000.

Since 1994, MPL has also served as the cataloging agency for the 43 SCLS member libraries who share their resources through the automated Integrated Library System (ILS), Koha. Koha is the software which supports acquisitions, circulation, cataloging and the public access catalog, LINKcat. An ILS is the library world’s version of an ERP system. By contract with SCLS, MPL staff provides the cataloging for our own materials and those of the other libraries. The revenue from this service is about \$465,000 each year.

MPL also participates in the statewide Wisconsin Public Library Consortium which was formed several years ago to provide Wisconsin citizens with access to electronically published materials. Via this organization, public libraries have pooled their resources to increase their purchasing power for ebooks and other downloadable materials.

MPL collaborates with or supports variety of community partners. A few examples are described below:

- MPL Youth Services staff works with MMSD staff to keep children reading during the summer. Youth Services staff visit classrooms and share information about MPL summer programs and events. To support early literacy efforts, we are also offering programs targeted to families with children in the 4K program.
- For several years, the Library has participated in the UW's annual "Go Big Read" program, purchasing copies of the title chosen by the UW and offering book discussions and related programming.
- This year, the Library is also hosting "Red, White & Read," a program with UW Student United Way and the Student Athletes Equally Supporting Others (SAESO) groups. UW athletes will be at our Sequoya Branch participating in interactive reading activities with children.
- Each year the Library provides space for local VITA volunteers to provide tax assistance both for walk-in patrons and by appointment.
- MPL provides computers and proctoring services for distance education institutions as well as space for individual tutoring sessions.
- MPL's Home Service Program staff and volunteers supply books to individuals at home who are unable to use the library due to an ongoing physical condition, as well as to Retirement Homes and Assisted Living, Health Care and Adult Day Care Facilities.

## APPENDIX II: MAPS

- City Facility Locations
- Aerial Photographs of Potential Facility Sites
- City Planning Maps:
  - Generalized Future Land Use Plan (Map 2-1)
  - Peripheral Planning Areas (Map 2-4)
  - Population Centroid
  - Potential Redevelopment Areas (Map 2-5)