

# MOUNT VERNON LIBRARY FOUNDATION STRATEGIC PLAN

## I. Mount Vernon Library Foundation Mission Statement:

The Mount Vernon Library Foundation's mission is to foster community support for the Library, its Board, and its Staff, specifically with the intent of helping fund a new library. The Foundation shall also solicit, receive, manage and disburse corporate and individual gifts and grants for the enhancement of library facilities, materials, services and programs.

## II. Vision Statement: Building for the Future

- A. The Mount Vernon Library Foundation will build and sustain a beautiful, new Mount Vernon City Library that is the reading and resource center for our region and a community gathering place; that will accommodate a growing multicultural and multigenerational community; and will provide both traditional and state of the art information services.
- B. The Library Foundation will work to build community enthusiasm and support for a new and expanded library for the City of Mount Vernon. After a new library is built, the Foundation will continue to function to raise funds for the support and betterment of the new library.
- C. The Library Foundation values community involvement and will work to gather community input and ideas, keep the public informed of Foundation activities, and seek new uses for the existing building.
- D. The Library of the Future that the City of Mount Vernon deserves will:
  - Be a much larger facility able to respond to increasing demands by an expanding and culturally-diverse population;
  - Address multigenerational, multicultural, and accessibility needs (ie spatially separated or sound proofed for age-related activities, etc.)
  - Be in a community supported, accessible location with sufficient parking.
  - Become a state of the art reading and information center offering a wide variety of resources and technology including books and other print material, digital, audio, video, and internet/computer accessible information.
  - Become a community and social center by providing community meeting spaces and an inviting environment where people feel free to gather.
  - Have a design that is flexible and adaptable, responding to evolving demands, technology, and community growth.
  - Be a building that is architecturally significant and reflects community values and our pride in Mount Vernon.
  - Provide sufficient and efficient space for staff to perform their duties.
  - Be environmentally responsible in terms of construction

## E. Tag Lines

- Love Your Library~Leave a Legacy
- Library for the Future
- Library For Ever
- Building for the Future
- A New Library for a New Century
- A Library to Serve Generations to Come
- Library of the Future
- Build a Legacy

III. Values Statement (describing the internal operational values that we use in dealing with each other on the Library Foundation Board—in other words, how we treat each other.)

The Mount Vernon Library Foundation works to create an environment where we treat each other with respect; encourage the presentation and discussion of new ideas; support the decisions of the majority, and most of all, have fun!

- Respect: Foster an environment where everyone's ideas are heard
- Collaboration and cooperation
  - Don't hesitate to suggest ideas across committee lines
  - Support decisions once made
- Diversity:
  - The Board should represent the community
  - Be sensitive to diverse values, cultures, and ideas
- Participation/Commitment
  - Participate in discussions and tasks set by the Board
  - Do what you say you are going to do
  - Take initiative
- Creativity:
  - Be open to new viewpoints and ideas
  - Envision all possibilities
  - Recognize there are no bad ideas when brainstorming
- Fun:
  - Conduct ourselves and our meetings so that each member enjoys coming to the meetings
  - Keep the length of the meetings within an agreed upon maximum timeframe

IV. External analysis: Obstacles &/or support systems; Strengths and weaknesses beyond Foundation control

A. Strengths

1. Strong support of Mayor and many City Council Members
2. Public generally more willing to support libraries—perceived as a core institution.
3. As county seat, largest city and central location, Mount Vernon has regional identity that will allow us to broaden base of support beyond city limits.
4. Mount Vernon Library has built a strong and positive reputation. High usage, responsive staff, good resources. Already has a good support system to build on.
5. Downward trend for new construction makes this a good time to build-- More for the money.

B. Weaknesses/Obstacles

1. Weak economy, though improving:
  - individuals reluctant to give large amounts
  - outlook for state or federal funding very dim
2. Location may be controversial.
3. Lack of a large donor base in Mount Vernon area. No large corporations.
4. Lack of city sales tax that Burlington had. Need to rely on bond approval

V. Internal analysis: Foundation strengths and weaknesses, i.e. things we can control

A. Strengths

1. \$500,000 gift
2. 501(c) 3 status
3. Board structure, board membership, bylaws, etc. being developed.
4. Enthusiasm, willingness to get involved.
5. Developing a strategic plan, communication plan, board development.

## B. Weaknesses

1. Lack of expertise in fundraising.
2. Ability to manage the message and be on the same page
3. Lack of staff to handle myriad of daily concerns: bookkeeping, scheduling, creating budgets, timelines, presentations, etc.
4. Lack of funds for research and planning: for feasibility study, donor research, architect, marketing material, etc.

# Foundation Goals and Strategies

## Goals: What we need to do to get a new library

A. Determine Community Support for a new library with a Needs Assessment or Project Scope. Study should answer the following questions:

1. How do we know the community wants a new library?
2. What is the problem with current library? What opportunities or needs are not being met in the current situation?
3. Why can't we just renovate the current building instead of building a new one?
  - How do renovation costs compare to new building costs?
  - Are there physical requirements needed that the old building fails to meet?
  - Will operating costs be higher/lower in new building?
7. Is current building good for something else?
8. What opportunities can be met with a new building?
9. How does current library compare to other libraries in terms of population per square footage, program opportunities, etc.
10. What does the library say about the values-legacy of our community?

B. Obtain City Council approval and support

C. Build public support and involvement

## Strategies: How we are going to achieve these goals

1. Identify qualified consultants, time line, and cost estimates for needs assessment. Troy to get names; Harold to contact Lanie McMullin, Sara H. to contact Ross Jamieson.
  2. Write a grant to fund a needs assessment study.
  3. Final Report should present compelling argument and vision to support need for new library.
  4. Report to be used in public presentations, fund-raising appeals, to financial advisors, potential donors, etc.
  5. Work with consultant to develop questionnaires, focus groups, etc. for public comment.
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1. Above consultant to present Needs Assessment report to City Council.
  2. Ask Mayor and/or City Council for resolution of support to be used in fund raising efforts.
  3. Work with City staff to get on library project on the Capital budget schedule and have a bond put on the ballot.
  4. Explore collaborative efforts with other City departments or public-private partnerships.
  5. Ask Mayor to appoint additional city staff to Foundation to build even more support and collaboration with the City. (Finance office, Econ Development, Buildings)
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1. Build Library Foundation Board to include influential people, potential donors, community organizational support, business with in-kind services, professional services, etc.
    - a. Ask businesses, service clubs, community institutions (College, Chamber, Hospital, etc.) County, to appoint representatives to serve on Foundation.
  2. Have consultant present Needs Assessment study to Community wide event (Lincoln Theater), and to community groups: Chamber, Seniors, Service clubs, financial advisors, etc.

3. Develop publicity plan to convince public of need for new facility and raise awareness of Fdn. goals, activities and progress.
  - a. Participate in community events
  - b. Develop branding, logo, give-aways
4. Invite public participation and input
  - a. Architectural contests
    - Architectural models by college students \$\$
    - Kids drawing contest
5. Work with consultant to develop questionnaires, focus groups, etc. See A4 above.

D. With City, determine location Efforts

1. Suggest several alternative locations with pros and cons
2. Explore partnerships with other City depts or private-public partnerships.
3. Suggest alternative use for current building

E. Begin Fundraising

1. Appoint a fund-raising committee of the Foundation and others familiar with fund-raising.
2. Develop fundraising plan and time line.
3. Research other capital campaigns to determine funding competition.
4. Research and develop list of potential big donors including corporate givers, foundations, grants, and individuals.
5. Develop list of possible in-kind donations from businesses and corporations.
6. Do feasibility study and prepare case statement.
7. Assign people to meet with potential donors.
8. Hire staff administrator and possible intern to do record keeping, send tax info, write thank you letters, etc.

F. Hire Architect to develop architectural program and design facility

1. Research firms that are knowledgeable about Library facilities.
2. Write RFP
3. City hires architect and appoints project manager.
4. Ask Mayor to appoint building committee to assist architect with developing architectural programs.

