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MAR 15 2010

CITY MANAGERS OFFICE  
LAWRENCE, KS

March 11, 2010

Lawrence City Commission  
City of Lawrence  
P.O. Box 708  
Lawrence, KS 66044-0708

Dear Mayor and City Commissioners:

In recent years the Lawrence Public Library Board of Trustees and the Lawrence City Commission have discussed the library's interest in expanding facilities and services to better serve the community. We come to you again with what we believe is a reasonable and fiscally-responsible proposal. We would appreciate the opportunity to present the merits of this expansion and renovation project through a public referendum.

The current library facility was constructed in 1972 when our community's population was half its current size, and when the circulation of library materials was less than one fourth its current rate. While the current building is solidly constructed, it is now inadequate to meet the increasing demands of our education-oriented citizens who borrow more than 1.3 million items from the library each year.

We have conducted a feasibility study that would address the library's primary service concerns through the renovation and expansion of the current library facility. This project will accomplish the following goals:

**Goal 1: Responsible re-use of the current facility.** The library would remain in its current location, and would continue to serve as an anchor and magnet for downtown Lawrence. This scaled-down library expansion and renovation project builds upon the library's existing facility, greatly enhancing the economic and environmental rationale for the project.

**Goal 2: Meeting the demands of the community.** The expansion would add between 15,000 and 20,000 square feet to the current building, and would focus on three primary goals: (1) doubling the size of our overcrowded children's room; (2) adding community meeting room space in response to extraordinary demand; and (3) providing more reading and computer areas. The Northeast Kansas Library System (NEKLS), the accrediting organization for our library, requires that libraries serving communities of our size have a minimum of 150 public-access computer workstations. Due to space limitations, the library is far short of that standard, with only 55 computer workstations. This renovation would allow the library to meet the NEKLS requirement for a minimum of 150 computer workstations.

**Goal 3: Improved customer service.** The project would renovate existing library spaces to upgrade their efficiency, functionality and appearance. Our "back office" spaces would be made more functional through the implementation of new technology such as RFID materials handling systems. These upgrades will result in greatly improved customer service for the citizens of Lawrence.

**Goal 4: Savings through energy efficiency.** Even with the addition of 15,000 to 20,000 square feet to the existing building, the newly-renovated library facility would be redesigned to use less energy than the current facility does, through the application of sustainable / green strategies. In fact, the project could result in the first LEED-certified public building in the community.

707 Vermont Street

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**Goal 5: Downtown Parking Solution.** The project would also feature a modest structured parking solution and additional angled parking on 7th and Vermont streets to increase parking from 178 spaces to approximately 230 spaces. The parking solutions we are suggesting would require city planning approval. They would not only help the library, but also would provide additional parking for the outdoor pool and senior center.

It is estimated that the total project cost for the expansion, renovation and parking enhancements, as well as all related costs including technology, furnishings and furniture, would not exceed \$18 million, with architectural and construction costs supported through a bond issue. This debt issue expense, estimated at approximately 1.5 mills, would sunset when the bond is repaid. This represents a significant reduction in project scope and cost as compared to previous plans to construct an entirely new library facility. We believe this project is responsive to the most significant library facilities needs, while being fiscally conservative and responsible.

Seeking an \$18 million bond in the current economic climate was a difficult decision to make. However, the Board and staff are trying to be forward thinking and trust that the economy will have sufficiently turned around by the time any taxes are needed to support such a bond.

In order to develop a concept design for the library expansion and renovation, the Library Board of Trustees is immediately issuing a Request for Qualifications for an architectural firm, so that we can provide information regarding a feasibility study, estimated total project costs and building and site design drawings and models. The Library will use its Capital Improvement Fund to fund this concept design.

The experiences of other public libraries around the country clearly demonstrate that an expanded and improved library facility will result in increased library usage. We anticipate at least a 25 percent increase in user visits and circulation of library materials in the expanded and renovated library facility. This will be on top of already record level library usage in the current facility. For this reason, the library will require enhanced funding to support additional staffing and operational expenses. We anticipate the ongoing need for a .5 mill increase in operational funding, which would increase the library budget from 3.2 to 3.7 mills, still below the City's library fund mill levy cap of 4.0.

How will this project benefit the community?

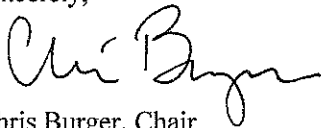
- It allows the Library to remain a downtown anchor and destination.
- There will be adequate space for children's books on age-appropriate shelving, as well as space for children's programming and classes.
- The library will be able to meet both public demand and regional library system requirements for access to computers.
- By increasing the amount of free community meeting space, more groups can be accommodated and fewer organizations will be denied due to unavailable rooms.
- Checkout of library materials will be made dramatically more efficient and convenient through the implementation of new materials handling technology.
- The library building will become a model of energy efficiency.
- It expands parking for three active community centers: the Senior Center, Outdoor Aquatic Center and the Library.

The library's administrative team and the Board of Trustees are united in their support for this project.

We respectfully request that a public referendum on library facility expansion and renovation, and associated operational funding, be placed on the November 2010 ballot so that the community can have an opportunity to vote upon this enhancement in the library's facility and its services. We further request that the City Commission begin its discussions of this topic in April so that there would be sufficient time to fully consider this project and craft a referendum.

Please feel free to contact any of us or Library Director Bruce Flanders with any questions or comments. We look forward to working with you on this exciting project.

Sincerely,



Chris Burger, Chair



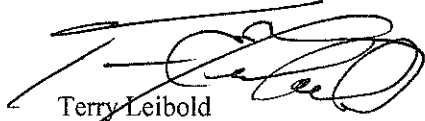
Mike Machell, Vice Chair



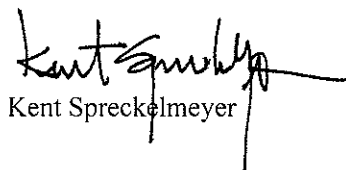
Joan Golden, Secretary-Treasurer



Fran Devlin



Terry Leibold



Kent Spreckelmeyer



Deborah Thompson

copy: David Corliss, City Manager, Cynthia Wagner, Assistant City Manager

28 May 2010

Mayor Mike Amyx  
Lawrence City Hall  
PO Box 708  
Lawrence, KS 66044

Re: Library Expansion

Dear Mayor Amyx,

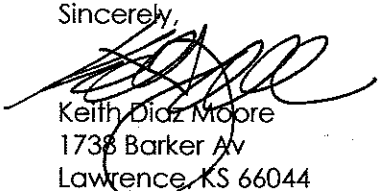
I understand that the City Commission will soon consider the proposed expansion to the Lawrence Public Library. I sincerely hope that you will consider voting in favor of the expansion. Libraries play a vital role in the democracy of our communities. Rooted in the Carnegie Library history makes clear that the purpose was to support the "industrious and ambitious; not those who need everything done for them, but those who, being most anxious and able to help themselves, deserve and will be benefited by help from others." A library provides access to sources of knowledge and given the power of knowledge in our society, there is something profoundly egalitarian about a public library.

As a priority, after providing for health and safety, education through schools and libraries quickly follows. The recent discussions regarding school closure reflect the community's passion about education. I believe the commission should give the public the opportunity to make this important investment decision.

While some may question the timing, I believe it is a perfect time for governments to be investing in its citizens. Pragmatically, the timing with low interest rates and lowered construction costs makes it an opportune time for such an investment. Additionally, the job creation associated with such a project makes good sense at this time. I believe the economy is at a point where if the right catalyst occurs, ripple effects of such investment will pay significant dividends. That ought to be viewed as one of the roles of government at all levels.

For all these reasons, I hope you will support placing the library addition referendum on the ballot when you have the opportunity to consider this proposal.

Sincerely,



Keith Diaz Moore  
1738 Barker Av  
Lawrence, KS 66044  
785.856.1402

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JUN 01 2010

**CITY MANAGERS OFFICE  
LAWRENCE, KS**

**CLARK H. COAN**

785-842-3458

114 Pawnee Ave. • Lawrence, Kansas 66046

clarkcoan@yahoo.com

May 22, 2010

Mr. Michael Machell  
Chair  
Lawrence Public Library  
Board of Trustees  
701 Vermont St.  
Lawrence, KS 66044

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**MAY 26 2010**

**CITY MANAGERS OFFICE  
LAWRENCE, KS**

Dear Mr. Machell:

I commend you for your hard work in improving the Lawrence Public Library. My father was chair of the board of trustees nearly 40 years ago when the new library was built. Further, I am a regular library patron who would like to see Lawrence build an outstanding library which would be the best library in Kansas. That is why I am writing.

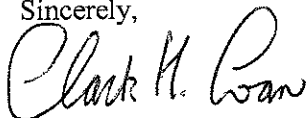
I strongly believe that this is the wrong time to ask the public for a tax increase to expand the current library. Many taxpayers are hurting financially due to the recession, so now is not the time to ask the taxpayers to dig into their pockets. Also, since it is not a presidential general election, the turnout will be much lower thereby decreasing the number of potential supporters.

The main reason I am opposed to this proposal is that I think Lawrence voters would support a new library which would be even better than the fabulous Topeka Shawnee County Library. The latter is literally a destination place which serves the needs of the whole community. It was funded partially by Shawnee County taxpayers.

So, I propose that the Board of Trustees back off from holding a referendum this November and begin planning anew. There are literally hundreds of millionaire county taxpayers who use the library but are not paying for services. So, one of the first steps would be to expand the tax base to include the county (but exclude Baldwin and Eudora which have libraries). The second step could well be to hire the architect who designed the Topeka Library and have him come up with architectural plans. The final step would be to hold the referendum during either the 2012 or 2016 presidential general election.

Lawrence is perhaps the best town in Kansas. So, let's build the best library in the Sunflower State. Thank you for paying attention to my comments.

Sincerely,



Clark H. Coan

cc: Lawrence City Commissioners

**RECEIVED**

June 7, 2010

JUN 10 2010

Mr. Clark H. Coan  
114 Pawnee Avenue  
Lawrence, KS 66046

CITY MANAGERS OFFICE  
LAWRENCE, KS

Dear Mr. Coan:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter of May 22, 2010. I regret that a recent business trip did not afford me the opportunity to respond to you until now, but as you can imagine it sometimes can be a challenge to balance regular job responsibilities with those of the library. In any event, I am glad to finally have a few free moments in which to answer your letter.

It was interesting to learn that your father was a trustee when the library was built in 1972. It helps to keep in perspective all of the prior work that has been done to grow and maintain the library particularly in light of our current efforts to improve the library. We really do build on the hard work of those before us.

I appreciate your concern regarding the timing of a proposed property tax increase. The board of trustees also considered this concern. While we recognize the financial challenges faced by some taxpayers, we also noted that library usage has increased significantly during the economic downturn – over 10% from 2008 to 2009 alone. In short, there is a demonstrated need for the “free” services that the library offers to the community. Many patrons are using the computers to look for jobs, research companies, and network with other job seekers. In March alone we estimated that more than 9300 people used the public computers. In addition, our computer lab continues to provide classes that assist library users in enhancing their computer skills so they can compete in the job market. Finally, the new business center is specifically tasked with assisting entrepreneurs and others interested in starting or growing a business.

We are very pleased to provide this assistance, but we continue to face challenges in terms of space and resources. When the current library first opened in 1972, the population of Lawrence was roughly half what it is today and the library’s circulation was one-fourth of the current number. It is a testament to the foresight and planning of your father and the board of trustees that the current facility has served us so well over the past four decades, but it also underscores the need for additional investment in the existing facility. At least on this point, I believe we have common ground.

Because we recognize that it may be difficult for many taxpayers to agree to a tax increase at this time, the library board has endeavored to be very transparent in our actions. We believe that Lawrence voters do value the public library and we are simply asking that they make the decision whether now is, in fact, the right time to fund improvements to the existing structure. Our public outreach effort to date has demonstrated that there is strong support for the library, but it is difficult to gauge whether this will translate to a positive outcome at the polls. I agree that voter turnout

might be higher if this were a presidential election year, but given general voter anxiety regarding healthcare reform, the environment, the war on terror, and the apparent animosity towards Congress, I believe that we could still see a reasonably strong turnout for an off year election.

I must disagree with you on supporting a library that rivals the Topeka and Shawnee County Library. While I agree with your opinion that this is a marvelous facility, I don't feel that it is necessary to build a similar library to adequately serve the Lawrence community. Moreover, the Topeka library receives about five times the public funding than we do, so we would have to raise taxes considerably to achieve the necessary level of financing to support a library of this size. Again, where I think we may find common ground is in making the library a "destination place" that offers multiple community attractions. I have attended several meetings with library staff, city representatives, members of the City Commission, and the project architects at which we have discussed enhancing the library's function as a gathering place, a community destination, and a multi-use facility for concerts or public events. Once a final plan is developed, I hope that you will be as excited by these potential developments as I am.

Clark, once again thank you for taking the time to write. I am confident that we can have one of the best libraries in the Sunflower State while effectively meeting the needs of our community and responsibly addressing the concerns of taxpayers. Should the City Commission agree to the board of trustee's request, I hope that we can count on your support in our efforts to pass the referendum this November.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Machell', with a stylized, flowing script.

Michael Machell

cc: Lawrence City Commissioners

cc: Bruce Flanders