



## DISCUSSION ITEMS

### Agenda Item # 8

#### AGENDA REPORT SUMMARY

**Meeting Date:** June 26, 2018

**Subject:** North County Library Authority Library Redevelopment Task Force update

**Prepared by:** Jon Maginot, City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager

**Approved by:** Chris Jordan, City Manager

**Attachment(s):** None

**Initiated by:**  
City Council

**Previous Council Consideration:**  
November 16, 2017

**Fiscal Impact:**  
None

**Environmental Review:**  
Not applicable

**Policy Question(s) for Council Consideration:**

- There are no policy questions for Council consideration at this time

**Summary:**

- The NCLA Board is exploring potential redevelopment of the Main Library using non-City of Los Altos funds
- The Task Force has undertaken an update to the 2008 Library Space and Services Needs Assessment and an architectural feasibility study
- The Task Force is currently in the process of surveying the community regarding a potential revenue measure

**Staff Recommendation:**

Receive an update from the North County Library Authority Library Redevelopment Task Force



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### **Purpose**

To receive an update on the North County Library Authority Library Redevelopment Task Force

### **Background**

On November 16, 2017, the City Council met in a joint session with the Los Altos Hills City Council. At that meeting, the two bodies discussed redevelopment of the Main Library, to be led by the North County Library Authority (NCLA) and both bodies agreed to issue a joint letter to Los Altos Library Endowment (LALE) and Friends of the Los Altos Library (Friends) regarding their participation in a study on the potential redevelopment of the Los Altos Library.

On December 19, 2017, NCLA initiated a Task Force to explore redevelopment of the Main Library. This Task Force consisted of a representative from NCLA (Jean Mordo), the Los Altos Library Commission (Cindy Hill), the Friends (Mary Jo Kelly) and LALE (Bob Simon). The purpose of the Task Force was to begin to explore options for redeveloping the Library, either through expansion and remodel or a complete re-build.

### **Discussion/Analysis**

As part of the initial steps of the process, the Task Force recommended updating the 2008 Library Services and Space Needs Assessment and conducting an architectural feasibility study to determine the advantages/disadvantages (including cost) of remodel/expansion of the existing facility compared to building a new library.

NCLA engaged the services of Group 4 Architecture, Research + Planning, Inc. to update the Needs Assessment and STRATAap to conduct the feasibility study.

### Needs Assessment Update

A Library Needs Assessment was completed in 2008 outlining the needs for the two Los Altos Libraries, including service and space needs. The Assessment indicated that an additional 11,000 square feet was needed for the Main Library.

During a two-month process, Group 4 met with stakeholders from the Los Altos Library Commission, Friends of the Library, Los Altos Library Endowment, Los Altos Library staff and Santa Clara County Library District Administration. These meetings included discussions on current operations of the Library, current and future needs of the Library, library trends, and community aspirations. Group 4 also reviewed available data and information and observed activities and conditions in the Library.

The Needs Assessment Update affirmed the need for an expanded Library. The conclusion of the update is that a minimum of 12,000 additional square feet of space is needed beyond the current library space of 28,000 square feet. The Needs Assessment Update, with the input of Library staff, identified the following challenges with the current Library:



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1. Inadequate programming space (i.e. programs exceed Orchard Room's 100 person capacity, no dedicated children's storytime space, use staff conference room for programs). Note: conference room is also used for staff meetings, Friends sorting, lactation space, all-staff computer and occasional storage
2. Inadequate space to implement new services that emerge over time (i.e. Passport Services, Reading Program)
3. Lack of collaborative space (i.e. small meeting rooms for group study, tutors and students, book discussion groups)
4. Need for dedicated space for teens. Current space used by tutors and as an overflow program space
5. Too few electrical outlets at seated areas to support laptops and devices. Electric conduit has reached capacity
6. Lack of family/all gender restroom
7. Congested public circulation areas and holds room
8. Crowded shelving (current collection is 267,000 / 234,000 in 2008) (children's area maxed)
9. Accessible ad display shelving (i.e. current shelves are 7.5 feet high)
10. Reconfigure workroom for efficiency and to allow staff to collaborate better
11. Inadequate space for Friends of the Library-operated book sale, café and sorting area
12. Lack of parking

While the Needs Assessment Update does not specify how space should be used, it does indicate that additional space is needed for larger program space, expanded children's library space, dedicated teen space (the current space is often used for tutoring and other activities), collaboration space, more and different seating choices, more space for personal technology, more accessible physical collection and space for the Friends of the Library. The Needs Assessment Update does indicate that while 40,000 square feet is the minimum needed, additional square footage may help to better serve the needs of the community within the Library.

Group 4 further recommends that next steps in the process include gathering community input on library service and space allocation priorities within the Library.

#### Architectural Feasibility Study

The architectural feasibility study looked at whether it was possible to expand the library by 9,000 or 11,000 sq. ft. and the cost for either option as well as building a new, 40,000 sq. ft. library on the site and its costs.

#### *Expansion of Library*

The study looked at expanding the current building by 9,000 or 11,000 sq. ft. These numbers were based upon numbers included in the 2008 Needs Assessment.



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The current library building consists of two parts. The original building, which comprises the majority of the square footage, was built in the late-1950s or early-1960s and includes the reference desk area, teen area and the bulk of the collection. The building was expanded in the early-1990s. This expansion includes the southern portion of the library (the circulation area, program room and staff areas). The Library functions basically as two separate buildings which are joined together to form one building.

The construction style used in the original building makes expansion of the library by going above the original library cost-prohibitive. Such expansion would require significant upgrades to the structure of the building in order to meet current construction standards. This option was deemed not feasible.

The study also looked at expanding the library outward. This too was deemed not feasible. Expanding toward the soccer field or toward the History Museum would require eliminating parking and roadway access. Expanding into the orchard toward City Hall would require relocating a massive utility trench which runs parallel to the Library building. Expanding toward San Antonio Road was deemed not feasible as the Public and Community Facilities District, of which the Library is a part, requires a 40-foot setback and so there is not sufficient space to expand in that direction and gain significant amounts of square footage.

The Architectural Feasibility Study did determine that expansion was possible by demolishing the 1990s addition and rebuilding a two-story building in its place. This building would be tied into the remaining library as it is today. This construction would consist of 18,000 sq. ft. for a gain of 9,000 sq. ft. The Study also proposes adding a second-story overhang to the parking and delivery area immediately adjacent to the Library. This would allow for continued parking and access while adding approximately 2,000 sq. ft.

The study also determined that construction of a new 40,000 sq. ft. building in the same location as the existing library is possible. The study looked at the cost of a two-story building in order to allow for additional parking and open space.

While the study determined that all three options are possible, though the related costs for expansion (\$19.9 million for 9,000 sq. ft., \$22.1 million for 11,000 sq. ft.) seem to make expansion cost-prohibitive. Meanwhile, the cost of demolition and re-building of the Library amounts to approximately \$44 million.

At the request of the Task Force, the architectural feasibility study also looked at the cost to renovate the existing square footage of the Library. This amounts to approximately \$6.7 million.

#### Task Force recommendation

At its May 3, 2018 meeting, the Task Force reviewed all information gathered, including both studies. The Task Force unanimously recommended to the NCLA Board to move forward with exploration



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of the redevelopment of the Main Library, specifically to tear down the existing building and replace it with a 40,000 square-foot two-story building.

On May 14, 2018, the NCLA Board approved moving forward with exploration of the redevelopment of the Main Library, specifically to tear down the existing building and replace it with a new building between 35,000 and 50,000 square feet. The size of the facility will be further refined during the planning process.

The NCLA Board also approved conducting a survey for the purpose of gauging community support for a potential revenue measure. NCLA is contracting with Godbe Research Associates for this survey, which is expected to be completed by the end of June 2018.

Also on May 14, the NCLA Board approved expansion of the membership of the Task Force to allow for additional community input into the process.

**Recommendation**

Receive an update from the North County Library Authority Library Redevelopment Task Force.