



David M Dunfield, AIA, LEED AP

1641 Rhode Island Street  
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

785-840-4773

[info@dunfelddesign.com](mailto:info@dunfelddesign.com)

## Memo

**Date:** February 26, 2016

**To:** Cindy Stewart Grant, Library Director  
Members of the Library Foundation

**Project:** Potential expansion or new library

**Subject:** Site evaluation

For your consideration, my comparison of the two possible sites for a library expansion or new building are below:

### Zoning

Both sites are zoned "Historic Business District," which has several implications. First, there are no required building setbacks; the buildings can be fully built out to the property lines. The exception is when the property is "abutting a residential use or zone." The current building partially abuts residential property on the east, so a side yard setback of 10 feet may be required.

Also, no off-street parking requirement exists within this zoning category. This is common in downtown zoning districts, as it is thought that downtowns function best when parking is shared among different uses. However, it may not serve the library's needs to have no dedicated parking.

Third and Bury:

- The existing building has setbacks that would, practically speaking, prevent maximum build-out of the site. See "Internal Building Organization" discussion below.
- The potential 10 foot side yard setback could further limit the expansion possibilities.

Third and Main:

- The new building could be built to the property lines, maximizing the available area.

### Parking

A rule of thumb for libraries is to provide one parking space for every three hundred square feet of building. This would result in a 16,500 square foot building needing 55 parking spaces. That number may be substantially reduced because of the downtown location. On the other hand, a large meeting space will put considerable demand on parking.

Third and Bury:

- The building site has an opportunity for a parking lot on land to the east to park approximately 15 cars. This would be similar to the quantity of parking currently provided in the off-street lot.

Third and Main:

- Fully using the site to meet the Needs Assessment allows no off-street parking.
- Using a similar amount of the site for parking as is available to the Third and Bury site would limit the size of the building, as noted below.

## **Square Footage**

Neither site is optimal in terms of meeting projected space needs if parking is a consideration. But both could house a library considerably better able to meet the community's needs than the current building. The attached drawing shows both sites with similarly sized building footprints and a modest amount of parking at each.

Third and Bury:

- Existing building is 6,000 square feet (not 7,000 as shown in the Needs Assessment).
- Available expansion space in the existing parking lot adds 8,500 square feet, for a total possible of 14,500 square feet. This is about 88% of the 10-year projection in the Needs Assessment.
- If the side yard setback of 10 feet is applied for the full length of the east side of the site, the total expansion area is reduced by about 1,000 square feet.

Third and Main:

- The total area of the property is 19,525 square feet, which is adequate to meet the projected 10-year need. Little or no parking would be included in this option.
- If parking is provided for 21 cars, as shown, the available building area at this site is reduced to about 13,500 square feet. This is approximately 82% of the 10-year projected need.

## **Internal Building Organization**

A new building on an open site naturally provides more options in designing the layout than an existing building with structures already in place. Additionally, because flexibility and adaptability are such important aspects of contemporary library design, a layout that works well for the present while accommodating existing structures may not be as capable of adapting to future programmatic changes.

Third and Bury:

- The south one-third of the existing building contains two interior bearing walls (walls that support the roof above) which limit renovation possibilities considerably.
- The building's east and west exterior walls are also bearing walls. The east wall could be largely removed and a new structure put in place adjoining the addition. However, it is unlikely that the west wall could be similarly treated, as there is a distance of only 18 feet to the west property line. Thus, the expensive change to the structure on the west would result in a gain of only about 1800 square feet, the layout of which would be limited by structural needs.

Third and Main:

- This site clearly has advantages over the existing building site in terms of freedom to design a layout that best meets the library's needs.

## **Budget**

The attached spreadsheets show three options for utilizing the two sites: expansion of the current building with new parking adjacent to it, a new building of 16,500 square feet with no dedicated parking, and a smaller new building with some off-street parking.

The budgets do not include any costs for land acquisition or proceeds from a possible sale of the existing building site.

Construction costs are given as a range based on recent experience with similar projects. The costs are given in 2016 dollars. Escalation due to inflation of 3-5% per year should be anticipated depending on timing of the project.

## **Conclusions**

It is clear that neither of the site options is optimal for the library's expansion needs. Both are too small to house the entire projected need plus parking. But both provide opportunities to greatly enhance the library's ability to serve the community. The Foundation and Board should consider several questions in order to make a final selection concerning an expansion site, including:

- How critical is on-site parking to the success of the project? If parking is a high priority, neither of the two sites may be adequate to the library's needs.
- Are there other opportunities for trading or purchasing properties in the city?
- What is the fundraising capacity of the library, through public and private efforts?