



November 19, 2004

Mr. Mike Wildgen, City Manager  
City of Lawrence  
P.O. Box 708  
Lawrence, KS 66044-0708

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CITY MANAGERS OFFICE  
LAWRENCE, KS

Dear Mike:

Earlier this week, the Library Board of Trustees discussed the New Direction Task Force's 2004 research relating to an expansion and possible relocation of the Lawrence Public Library in downtown Lawrence. The New Direction Task Force report will be issued next month.

Following the issuance of this report, the next step in this exploratory process will be the creation of an RFP for library consultant services. The consultant(s) will make suggestions regarding the library's operations in an expanded facility, and will study the feasibility of three potential downtown Lawrence sites recommended by the New Direction Task Force for further study.

In defining the scope of the consultant services, it will be important to decide whether those services will focus exclusively on the potentialities for expanding the library facility and library services, or if they will also examine the expanded library within the context of and as a driving force for downtown revitalization and re-development.

As you know, the Eldridge Hotel is now operating under new ownership. Preservation and stabilization of this building as a crucial historical cornerstone of downtown Lawrence is important to our community. While not the only site considered, the nearby, current location of the Library was identified by the New Direction Task Force as perhaps the most logical and appropriate site for the development of an expanded facility. To the extent that the hotel's goals and the Library's goals overlap, particularly in a shared need for greatly expanded parking and meeting space, we believe there is a basis for an exploration of mutual interests.

The feeling of the Library Board is that an RFP scope of services statement that has as its centerpiece plans an expanded, destination library, but which also includes a study of the library's environs, would allow for the formation of exciting concepts for public/private partnerships, multi-use development, and re-development of this entire segment of downtown Lawrence.

We seek your guidance regarding the desired scope of services look forward to an opportunity to discuss this issue with you and the other members of the Lawrence City Commission. Representatives of the Library Board and I would be pleased to attend a City Commission meeting or study session, or to correspond with you by mail or email. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

*Bruce*

Bruce Flanders  
Director

707 Vermont Street

Lawrence, KS 66044-2371

(785) 843-3833

Fax: (785) 843-3368