



# **Shared Services: Let Libraries Lead the Way**

## **A New Joint Library for Fanwood and Scotch Plains Feasibility Study**

**Library Development Solutions  
Princeton Junction, NJ**

**May 2009**

# Table of Contents

## Page

Executive Summary

Introduction

1

An Overview of the Fanwood and Scotch Plains Libraries

1 - 6

Library Vision, Mission and Goals

6

The Fanwood and Scotch Plains Library User Community

7 - 8

Community Needs Assessment

9 - 11

The Library Landscape in Union County

11 - 13

The Future of Libraries

13 - 15

The Case for a Joint Library for Fanwood and Scotch Plains

16 - 18

Recommendations

18 - 21

Building and Operating the Joint Library

21 - 27

Conclusion

28

## Attachments

1. Library Design

29 - 32

2. Joint Library Law

33 - 34

# Executive Summary

Library Development Solutions, a Princeton-based consulting firm, was retained to explore the feasibility of establishing a joint library to serve the residents of Fanwood and Scotch Plains. A proven track record of successful collaboration between the Fanwood Memorial Library and Scotch Plains Public Library has demonstrated that the library staff can work effectively together to deliver improved library service. Because both libraries need significant physical improvement to deliver a modern library service program and to conform to current ADA requirements, the Boards of both libraries agreed to explore options for forming a single organizational library entity to serve both communities as allowed by New Jersey legislation. A grant from the State of New Jersey Department of Community Affairs to assist municipalities to explore a consolidated approach to delivering services provided further impetus for Fanwood and Scotch Plains to consider a joint library as a cost effective solution for the delivery of library service.

After listening to the community in focus groups and reviewing library survey data, assessing the cost of improving the existing libraries, and weighing the pros and cons of independent municipal libraries in Fanwood and Scotch Plains versus a single joint library, ***Library Development Solutions recommends the establishment of a joint library building to serve both communities.***

A new library to serve the residents of both communities is an investment in the future. Public libraries provide free and open access to knowledge and information to everyone in a community regardless of their income, race, or age. A number of studies conducted in the last five years and cited elsewhere in this report have documented that libraries contribute to local economic development by boosting literacy and education and creating a civic presence that encourages people to invest in businesses and local economic development projects.

After evaluating options for improving library service, Library Development Solutions' preferred solution is the construction of a new 52,252 sf library on the site of the existing Scotch Plains Public Library and sale or re-use of the Fanwood Library building for other municipal purposes. Estimated costs for a new library would be approximately \$16.3 - \$17.5 million, not including furniture and other project costs. It is estimated that \$7 million in improvements to the existing libraries would be needed just to meet current building code standards. **If the community decides that a new library is not feasible, then LDS recommends that Fanwood and Scotch Plains invest in renovating and expanding the Scotch Plains Library to serve as the joint library.**

Projected cost estimates for operating a joint library are also included in this report. In 2009 the two towns will spend approximately \$2 million to run the two independent libraries. Projections for operating the joint library estimate an annual expenditure of \$2.4 million.

The libraries and library staff in Fanwood and Scotch Plains have demonstrated that collaboration and cooperation results in improved library service. Library use statistics in both communities demonstrate steady increases in use as a result of these efforts. Forming a joint library will result in more cost effective service delivered in a modern, energy efficient building that will serve generations to come. Fanwood and Scotch Plains can lead the way for other NJ communities that are looking for ways to consolidate services.

# Introduction

In 2006 Library Development Solutions was engaged by the Borough of Fanwood along with RMJM Hillier (architects) and Ruotulo Associates (fundraising consultants) to explore the feasibility of creating a joint library to serve the residents of both Fanwood and Scotch Plains. Grant funding from the State of New Jersey Department of Community Affairs provided the support for the project. The geographic proximity of the two towns, the shared regional school system, and a track-record of successful collaborations between the two town libraries provided the impetus to apply for the grant just at a point in time where the State was offering funding to support increased cooperation and sharing of services among towns as a way to potentially reduce municipal expenditures and the property tax burden on residents. Since both municipalities were exploring options for updating and modernizing library service the time seemed right to explore the potential benefits of merging the libraries into a single, joint library chartered to serve the residents in both communities.

In addition to conducting a needs assessment to identify community preferences for new and/or expanded library services, Library Development Solutions was asked to evaluate the current space in each library, develop a building program detailing the amount of space required to provide library service to residents of both communities, and develop cost projections for operating a joint library.

The study objectives were:

- 1) To determine community preferences for a new and or expanded library facility
- 2) To assess current conditions at the Fanwood and Scotch Plains libraries and determine the options for expansion
- 3) To prepare a building program that could ultimately guide an architect in designing space for a new and/or expanded Joint Library for Fanwood and Scotch Plains

Consultants from Library Development Solutions visited the Fanwood and Scotch Plains libraries on several occasions, discussed service and facility priorities with the community, and met with the Boards and Library Directors to identify concerns and ideas to improve the functional capability of the libraries.

## An Overview of the Fanwood & Scotch Plains Libraries

### Scotch Plains

With 14,000 square feet of useable space, the Scotch Plains Public Library is the larger of the two libraries. The library opened in 1967 to serve the residents in the growing township of Scotch Plains. Now open 69 hours per week, the Scotch Plains Public Library is located in the Town's central business district with free and accessible parking.

A group of citizens founded the Scotch Plains Reading Society in 1810, in 1816 the Scotch Plains Library Company was formed, and in 1888 this private association was incorporated. The library had its first home on the second floor of the Excelsior Hook and Ladder Company. In 1937 the Library Board supervised the construction of a small brick building,

which served the Township for over thirty years. In 1963, as a result of public referendum, the library became a municipal library, and in 1966, \$550,000 was authorized for the construction of a new library building, Sixty thousand dollars had previously been expended for the purchase of land adjacent to the old building and the new structure was built on the site of its predecessor. The Township applied a federal grant of \$75,404 towards construction costs, thus, for the sum of \$534,596, the new facility was completed in the spring of 1968.<sup>1</sup>

The Scotch Plains Public Library offers space that supports library service but it lacks many features found in modern libraries that would allow the library program to grow to meet increased demand for service. In recent years the Board of Trustees has invested in infrastructure repairs such as new energy efficient windows, new heating and cooling systems and roof repairs as well as cosmetic improvements but the library still lacks the space it needs to accommodate a growing collection of library materials, offer programming for adults and children on a wide variety of topics, and accommodate teens and older adults.. Planning for a proposed 12,000 square foot addition was put on hold pending discussions about forming a joint library with Fanwood Borough.

### **Fanwood**

The 6,000 square foot Fanwood Memorial Library, open 54 hours per week, was built in 1951. Almost from its inception, the Borough of Fanwood had a public library. The Borough Library grew from a group of literary minded women who began meeting in 1874, calling themselves the Saturday Book Club and later the Fanwood Book Club. They met at homes throughout the Borough until 1899 when they donated their collection of 156 books and \$26 to the Borough on the condition that they be made available to the public for loan free of charge.

In 1902 Fanwood voters established a municipal library, the Fanwood Free Public Library, allocating \$25 for its first year of operation. The library was located in a small room in the rear of the Post Office near North and Martine avenues. The Postmaster served as the librarian for a stipend of \$10 per month. The library took over the entire Post Office space in 1928 as circulation and the collection increased. In 1942 it moved to a storefront location on South Ave. In 1950, Fanwood voters approved a referendum for the construction of a freestanding library at the current location of North and Tillotson avenues. The library opened to the public on December 16, 1951 and was expanded in 1980, adding additional space on the ground floor and basement levels. Today, the Fanwood Library is located on a small parcel of land in a residential area of the Borough easily accessible by foot or car although parking is limited.

The Fanwood Memorial Library fits well with its surroundings but lacks space to adequately support the current library program. Significant expansion of the building in its current location is impossible; the only way for the library to grow is in a new location.

As noted previously both library facilities need significant physical improvements and financial investment to deliver the type of 21<sup>st</sup> century library service now found elsewhere in Union County, the State and region. Deficiencies common to each library include:

---

<sup>1</sup> Scotch Plains Junior Women's Club Book, 1968

- Insufficient space to support library programs for children, teens and adults
- Lack of space to accommodate the demand for public access computing and technology instruction
- Limited space for collection growth
- Lack of dedicated space for pre-teens and teens
- Inability to accommodate teens and adult comfortably during the after school hours due to limited seating
- No quiet space to support individual or group study, job seekers or researchers
- Lack of space to support continuing education instruction
- Lack of public meeting space to accommodate requests by community groups
- Lack of child-friendly space that allows for early literacy activities, parent child activities and after school study
- Lack of space to accommodate the public desire for comfortable seating that makes the library an alternative to home or the book store
- Lack of space for literacy and ESL instruction and tutoring
- Aging and energy inefficient buildings

In addition the Fanwood Library is inaccessible to individuals with disabilities and difficult to use for older adults as well as parents who visit the library with children in strollers. Limited parking at the Fanwood Library is also a problem.

### **Current Library Space**

The Fanwood and Scotch Plains libraries are providing service in outdated facilities that are in need of significant investment to upgrade basic building infrastructure, meet requirements for accommodating people with disabilities and to support a modern library service program. Both institutions have done an admirable job of keeping up with improvements needed to provide public access computing and other technology based programs that enhance the library user experience. But both libraries have made as many improvements as possible given the current buildings. The basic fact remains – Fanwood is operating a 6,000 square foot, 57 year old library and Scotch Plains is an 14,000 square foot, 41 year old building.

It is estimated that the minimum cost to remedy the deficiencies noted above would be at least \$6 million for the Scotch Plains Public Library and \$1 million for the Fanwood Library.

The two libraries serve a combined population of approximately 30,000 people. During operating hours the libraries offer:

- A wide array of programs for children ranging from lap sits for the youngest of children to after school programs for elementary school students
- Programs specifically targeted for teens
- Book discussion programs, lectures, writing workshops, and film series for adults
- Hi-speed access to the Internet via 15 public access computers at the Scotch Plains Public Library and 8 computers at the Fanwood Library
- Answers to questions either in person, by telephone, live chat or email
- Access to digital content on the library's web site and through subscription databases
- Access to the combined collections of the Fanwood and Scotch Plains libraries including a collection of picture books, easy readers, fiction, non-fiction, and

paperbacks for children and fiction, non-fiction, large print, audio books, DVDs, videos, and reference materials for adults

- Meeting space
- A safe place for children and teens to gather after school in a welcoming and nurturing environment
- Information about the Scotch Plains Public Library's programs and services on the library blogs and Facebook

Since 2005, The Fanwood and Scotch Plains Libraries have secured more that \$240,000 in funding to support shared services and used Interlocal Shared Services Agreements to:

- Share a common online library catalog that facilitates borrowing of library materials by residents of both towns from either library
- Transport materials between both libraries so residents can return their items at either location
- Save money and effectively maximize the use of existing funds though other cooperative efforts
- Forge a collaborative relationship with the joint school system
- Improve and upgrade both the collections in both libraries, develop shared policies, and cooperative programming and staff development activities
- Support electronic connectivity and to promote public awareness of joint services
- Develop a joint project to digitize local historical materials and make them available on the web
- Develop a program to more effectively deliver library service to the needs of families of children with autism and other disabilities
- Initiate joint programming that has attracted more than 11,000 children despite the fact that there is no dedicated program space for children in either library

Based on this already demonstrated success in sharing library resources, the Borough of Fanwood and the Town of Scotch Plains became interested in examining the feasibility of creating a joint public library in a new shared facility to replace the two existing aging buildings. The Library Boards in Scotch Plains and Fanwood have recognized that a new joint facility would more effectively serve the residents of both communities. A modern, library facility would increase the existing combined square footage by at least 50% and would be conveniently located with good walking and driving access for all residents. Building one new library to serve the residents of both towns will achieve economy of scale in providing high-quality library services for all 30,000 residents without duplication of staffing, materials, and the fixed costs associated with building and maintaining two library facilities.

The communities served actively use both libraries. Tables 1 and 2 provide a comparison of key library use indicators for the last five years for each library.

**Table 1  
Scotch Plains Public Library  
Library Use Indicators**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Hours open per year	2,828	3,106	3,113	3,311	3,383
Cardholders	14,297	12,791	12,566	14,603	16,519
Library visits annually	n/a	121,181	139,146	153,709	160,930
Annual circulation*	130,788	144,286	158,549	179,213	194,307
Collection size	80,655	81,587	82,934	83,452	83,573
Reference Questions	10,942	9,471	11,049	11,435	14,229
Adult program attendance	4,729	4,148	713	1,305	3,538
Kids programs attendance	3,011	1,582	2,577	6,622	7,397
Full time staff	14	13	11	12	11
FTE's**	11	10.9	10.4	9.95	14.8

\*Includes all material formats, e.g. books, CDs, audio books, DVDs, etc.

\*\*FTE's (full time equivalents) are the number of part time hours prorated to full time basis

**Table 2  
Fanwood Memorial Library  
Library Use Indicators**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Hours open per year	2,584	2,584	2,584	2,584	2,584
Cardholders	4,118	3,698	4,540	4,978	5,016
Library visits annually	45,056	49,550	51,893	55,005	58,212
Annual circulation*	75,733	72,933	59,452	57,213	51,019
Collection size	45,815	45,950	46,646	45,907	49,481
Reference Questions	3,109	3,385	2,984	3,105	2,455
Adult program attendance	688	794	822	1,128	1,339
Kids programs attendance	3,497	3,915	4,134	4,536	4,789
Full time staff	4	4	4	4	4
FTE's**	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7

\* Includes all material formats, e.g. books, CDs, audio books, DVDs, etc

\*\*FTE's (full time equivalents) are the number of part time hours prorated to full time basis

The statistics indicate the success of the Scotch Plains and Fanwood libraries in attracting new users.

The Scotch Plains Public Library had a:

- 32.8% increase in annual number of visits 2005 to 2008
- 48.5% increase in the number of items loaned from 2004 to 2008
- 15.5% increase in the number of cardholders, 2004 to 2008
- 30% increase in the number of reference questions, 2004 to 2008
- 145% increase in the number of children attending library programs, 2004 to 2008



The Fanwood Memorial Library statistics indicate a:

- 29% increase in the number of library visits from 2004 to 2008
- 21.8% increase in the number of cardholders, 2004 to 2008
- 95% increase in adult program attendance and 37% increase in children's program attendance, 2004 to 2008

These statistics show significant increases in use for both libraries despite the constraints imposed by their current space. The increases can be attributed to the leadership of the two current library directors and their commitment to collaborate in order to improve library service to the residents of both communities. In some ways the libraries are the victims of their own success, but the real story here is that with a modest investment in funding and visionary leadership people respond positively, use the libraries more frequently, and understand that a good public library is a worthwhile community investment.

## Library Vision, Mission and Goals

Individually each library has a mission and focus to guide the delivery of library service to their community residents. As the joint library project moves forward it will be important for the two library boards of trustees and the communities supporting the joint library to develop a shared vision describing the long-term goal for library service in Scotch Plains and Fanwood as well as a mission to guide the day-to-day operation of the library.

The Scotch Plains Public Library's **mission** is:

***To welcome and support our entire community with resources and services that enhance lifelong learning.***

The library's areas of emphasis are:

- Staff development and customer service
- Resources and services
- Physical plant
- Marketing and publicity
- Cultural community center
- Cutting edge services and programs

The Fanwood Memorial Library's **mission** is:

***To add value to the community by providing citizens of all ages with library services of high professional quality; to meet their evolving and on-going needs for educational, cultural, and recreational information; to promote literacy and lifelong learning; and to foster a love of reading.***

To fulfill its mission the Fanwood Memorial Library:

- Affirms the rights of all individuals to equal access to its resources and services
- Employs knowledgeable and well-trained staff committed to customer service.
- Keeps pace with, and uses effectively, the ever changing world of technology to access information needs.

# The Fanwood & Scotch Plains Library User Community

Fanwood Borough and Scotch Plains Township are contiguous communities in Union County. Although they are two distinct communities, in many ways the relationship between the two towns mimics other borough-township communities in New Jersey, which coincidentally happen to be the communities where the other 6 joint libraries operate<sup>2</sup>. Fanwood sits in the geographic center of Scotch Plains so that residents from the southern part of Scotch Plains must travel through Fanwood in order to reach the other side of town. Fanwood is a transportation hub for commuters to New York City with its easily accessible NJ Transit rail link while Scotch Plains provides easy car access to many points in New Jersey via Route 22 and Interstate 78.

Demographically the two towns are very similar. Table 3 summarizes key demographic characteristics for both towns.

**Table 3  
Demographic Detail for  
Fanwood and Scotch Plains**

	Fanwood	Scotch Plains
<b>Square Miles</b>	1.34	9.08
<b>Population</b>	7,174	22,732
Male	47.7%	47.9%
Female	51.5%	52.1%
<b>Age</b>		
15 or younger	22.6%	22.0%
16-24	7.6%	8.0%
25-44	31.3%	31.8%
45-64	22.7%	24.0%
65+	14.7%	14.1%
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>		
White	88.3%	78.9%
African American	5.1%	11.3%
Asian	4.4%	7.2%
Native American	.1%	.1%
Hispanic/Latino	3.7%	3.9%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>		
Educational Attainment 25 years+	4,999	15,911
High school graduates	19.9%	20.1%
Some college. associates degree	24.1%	22.3%
Bachelor's degree	32.7%	29.7%
Masters, professional, doctorate	18.3%	11.0%
<b>School enrollment</b>		
Population 3 years plus enrolled in school	1,750	5,638
Preschool and kindergarten	20.2%	18.0%
Grades 1-12	64.7%	63.7%

<sup>2</sup> NJ communities with joint public library service are: Princeton Borough and Princeton Township, Morristown and Morris Township; Chester Borough and Chester Township, Matawan-Aberdeen, Bedminster-Far Hills and Chatham and Chatham Township

College <b>Income</b>	15.1%	18.3%
Median Household Income	\$85,233	\$81,599
Per capita income	\$34,804	\$39,913
Total housing units	2,615	8,479
Owner occupied	90.6	77.5
Renter occupied	7.9	21.0

Source: epodunk.com, 2000 US Census

The similar demographics in each community make planning for a joint library easier in some ways. The two towns share similar values when it comes to supporting education, recreation and other quality of life services. The children who attend school together regularly cross the geographic boundaries of the two towns to attend play dates.

Because of the traffic patterns that regularly take Fanwood residents through Scotch Plains and Scotch Plains through Fanwood residents of each town use both libraries. If a book is unavailable in one location, a customer is likely to drive to the other library to get the book they want. Cooperative planning and a collaborative approach to children’s and adult programming provides opportunities for residents to go to the library which offers an event that is most convenient to their home or one that works best with their schedule. Population projections for Union County prepared by the North Jersey Transportation Authority in 2005 indicate the following population growth for Fanwood and Scotch Plains. According to these projections Scotch Plains’ population will grow by 11% between 2000 and 2030 while Fanwood’s population will grow by a more modest 8%.

**Population Projections  
Fanwood and Scotch Plains**

<b>Town</b>	<b>2000 pop</b>	<b>2005 pop</b>	<b>2010 pop</b>	<b>2015 pop</b>	<b>2020 pop</b>	<b>2025 pop</b>	<b>2030 pop</b>
Fanwood	7,170	7,180	7,210	7,340	7,560	7,800	7,800
Scotch Plains	22,730	22,750	22,930	23,300	23,970	24,700	25,270

Source: North Jersey Transportation Authority, May 23, 2005

As growth continues in both towns it will place an increased burden on both communities to invest in infrastructure improvements to both attract and retain residents. The projected growth bolsters the case for expanded library service.

# Community Needs Assessment

To learn more about the community's support for or against the formation of a joint library to serve Fanwood and Scotch Plains, Library Development Solutions facilitated ten focus group sessions in October and November 2007. This complemented the findings of focus groups that had been conducted for the Scotch Plains Library in May and June 2006 and a user survey conducted during the same time period. The results from these efforts are summarized below.

## Scotch Plains Public Library Survey

Approximately 850 surveys were mailed town-wide in May 2006 and another 100 were distributed in the library during March and April 2006. A total of 84 surveys, 8.8%, were completed and returned. The majority of respondents were Scotch Plains cardholders between the ages of 46-65 and 66+ who visited the library on a weekly basis. Respondents were asked to provide feedback about the specific library services they use, their satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the library and suggestions for improvements. Key findings included:

- Most people come to the library to check out material and then leave
- Most indicated that they did not access library services remotely via the library website
- Many come to the library to read magazines and newspapers, use the computers, attend art exhibits, look for quiet study space, bring their families to programs or use the meeting rooms
- When asked for specific recommendations for improvements respondents suggested more space for computers, additional meeting space, more programs for adults and children, expanded book, DVD, audio book and large print book collections
- Staff were complimented for their competence, courtesy, service and helpful attitude

## Scotch Plains Public Library Focus Groups

In May and June 2006 four focus group sessions were facilitated by CAM Consulting Group. Staff, young adults, and two groups of patrons were invited to attend these sessions. The objective was to obtain feedback about library services, the facility, opportunities for fundraising, and collaborative activities. Focus group attendees were characterized as "avid library users" who are comfortable and supportive of the community appeal of the library. Staff was given high marks for their courtesy and helpfulness. Teens indicated their willingness to become more involved in advising and working with the library to develop programs and services that would appeal to their peers. Others spoke about the need for the library to do more to promote its services to increase community awareness about the library and all it has to offer. Many were unfamiliar with the library's web site but offered helpful suggestions for ways in which the library could improve its use of technology.

On a long term basis the focus groups expressed their desire for expanded library collections, a spacious computer lab, small work tables, comfortable seating, additional meeting rooms, more quiet areas, improved space for children and adults and a larger facility.

## Focus Groups to Explore the Joint Library Project

In October and November 2007 residents from both Fanwood and Scotch Plains were invited to attend focus group sessions to explore the feasibility of establishing a joint library to serve

both towns. Teens, older adults, business and community leaders, parents, library users and non-users, the general public, NJ library leaders, members from both library boards and staff. More than 100 people attended one of these sessions.

Topics discussed with each group included:

- The role of the two libraries in contributing to the quality of life in Fanwood and Scotch Plains, with a particular emphasis on the library's role in the community
- A discussion about which libraries they use and why
- A brainstorming exercise to describe their perfect library
- An assessment of the strengths of the Fanwood and Scotch Plains libraries as well as areas in which they could improve
- A discussion about the joint library concept and specifically what excited them and what frightened them about the idea
- The community's willingness to support library service now and in the future
- Community awareness about the libraries and suggestions for improving the libraries' profile and visibility

Those attending the sessions agreed in their belief that public libraries are important to the quality of life in both communities and identified a number of roles for the libraries both now and for the foreseeable future. Specifically, they see the library as:

- **A community-gathering place** where they can have face-to-face interactions with others in the community. From teens to seniors, all of the groups agreed that the libraries could play an important role in providing the space needed to facilitate cross-generational interaction.
- **A center for lifelong learning** where anyone can find the resources – needed to learn, relearn and retool in order to be productive and contributing members of society.
- **A place for solitude and contemplation** that is conducive to reading, and a relaxing, place outside of the “noise” of everyday life.
- **An information hub and technology center** that can help improve the community's technological literacy and ability to find information on the web.
- **A source of free entertainment** whether that comes in the form of books, audio books, and movies or through wonderful programs that challenge the intellect and engage the senses.
- **A center for literacy** that promotes a love of reading and supporting pre-literacy and early-literacy among the community's children.
- **A source of civic pride** that will create a focus and identify for the community.

Focus group participants offered specific suggestions for improving the quality of library service, discussed other libraries they use and explained why, and shared their satisfaction and dissatisfaction about both libraries. But a key part of the discussion centered on the idea of forming a joint library to serve both communities.

Residents were undecided about the value of forming a joint library but open to the idea provided that they have detailed information about the new library's location, the costs associated with a joint library, and the benefits that would accrue to both communities with improved and expanded state-of-the-art services, and potential cost savings. The fears expressed by the group centered on long-held concerns related to consolidation of the two towns and a sense that the unique identity associated with each library would be lost in a consolidation. But in the end, most agreed that it made sense to move ahead with the joint library feasibility study and to flesh out the details for community discussion and debate.

A summary report from the November 2007 focus groups, "Community Voices: A Report on Focus Group Sessions to Explore the Feasibility of Establishing a Joint Library for Fanwood and Scotch Plains", can be found online at: [www.thejointlibrary.org/focus1.htm](http://www.thejointlibrary.org/focus1.htm) or the detailed report is available in each library.

## The Library Landscape in Union County & New Jersey

In the last 10 years there has been significant investment in upgrading library facilities both in Union County and in New Jersey. Table 4 provides a summary of these library building expansion and renovation projects. Out of 20 Union County communities Fanwood, Scotch Plains, Mountainside, and Roselle Park are the only communities that have not made significant investments in upgrading library facilities.

In 1999, the State of New Jersey authorized \$45 million in state bond funding that become available in 2001 to help assist this effort. By the time the funds were exhausted, more than 68 communities in NJ had renovated, expanded or built new libraries. A complete list of communities that invested in new libraries can be found at [www.njstatelib.org/LDB/Construction/bond\\_fund\\_awards.php](http://www.njstatelib.org/LDB/Construction/bond_fund_awards.php). The New Jersey Library Association is seeking sponsors for legislation to authorize a second round of state-based construction grants and funds allocated to the State under provisions of the economic stimulus plan may include federal funds that can be used to underwrite a portion of library construction.

**Table 4**  
**Library Improvements in Union County Libraries**  
**1998 - 2008**

Library	Date	State aid	Total Cost	Improvements
Berkeley Heights	2002 2008		\$100,000 \$140,000	ADA Improvements Renovated children's department
Clark	2005		\$1,800,000	Addition and renovation
Cranford	2001	\$394,406	\$1,750,000	\$5 million expansion/community center
Elizabeth				Renovated main library
Garwood	2003-06	Part of New School	\$720,000 unknown	Furnishings and additional books Doubled its size in a new building
Hillside	2008		\$3 million	Planning for new building
Kenilworth	2008		\$255,000 \$27,000	Elevator Planning interior improvements

Linden	2009		\$15,000,000	New library under construction
New Providence	2001	\$237,263	\$1,052,748	Addition, community room, renovation
Plainfield	1998 - 2008	\$178,118	\$3,233,000	Major renovations
Rahway	2001	\$2,009,442	\$13,097,565	New building
Roselle	2000-08			Plans for major expansion and renovation
Springfield	2004 Ongoing		\$400,00 \$600,000	Atrium Renovations
Summit				New library
Union	2001	\$72,681	\$342,000	New branch, renovating main library
Westfield	2007		\$800,000	Complete renovation of new building (built 1986)

The Union County and New Jersey public library construction experience mirrors what many communities throughout the U.S. have discovered; that investing in library improvements is important to overall community economic development plans.

A number of studies to assess the impact of new libraries in cities and smaller communities have documented the economic and social benefit of these investments. A 2007 study by the Urban Libraries Council, ***Making Cities Stronger***<sup>3</sup> offers the following conclusions regarding the ways in which libraries create a strong local economy:

- **Early literacy services offered by libraries contribute to long-term economic success.**<sup>4</sup> Public libraries are adding a variety of literacy-based programs to their traditional story time offerings. Libraries offer early literacy training for at-risk parents and their children, work in partnership with local schools to help close the achievement gap, offer summer and vacation reading programs to ensure that children maintain their reading skills when school is not in session. Investing in early literacy helps build an educated workforce.
- **Career and employment resources found in libraries help prepare workers with new technologies**<sup>5</sup>  
Libraries are the entry to the workforce for many new technology users and particularly for those who are unable to afford their own computer or high-speed access to the Internet. In a world where almost all job searching and applications take place in an online environment it is essential that all community residents have access to free, public access computing in order to remain competitive in today's workplace. Technology instruction, access to subject based databases with a wide array of information about businesses in the US and abroad, and the skilled help of librarians and technology savvy library staff can ensure that everyone has the opportunity to retool and succeed in the economic recovery.

<sup>3</sup> Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development, Urban Libraries Council, January 2007

<sup>4</sup> IBID, page 3

<sup>5</sup> IBID, Page 3

- **Libraries offer assistance to the small business owners and entrepreneurs<sup>6</sup>.**  
The retooling of our economy is likely to increase the number of small or home based businesses as people seek creative solutions to earning a living. Library partnerships with regional and state agencies that offer training and assistance to business startups as well as organizations like SCORE, coupled with specialized resources for business, have proven in many communities that libraries offer unique support for the small business sector.
- **Public library buildings are catalysts for physical development<sup>7</sup>.**  
The Urban Libraries Council study research demonstrates that libraries are highly regarded and perceived as contributing to the stability, safety and quality of life in communities. Libraries also attract tremendous foot traffic, provide for long-term tenancy, and complement neighboring retail and cultural destinations

## The Future of Libraries

In recent years there has been a great deal of speculation about whether or not libraries will survive long-term as a result of changes in the manner in which people seek and use information. As the leaders and residents of Fanwood and Scotch Plains weigh the pros and cons of forming a joint library and investing in a new library building, it is important to think broadly about the role of a community library and how that role has changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Public libraries improve people's lives, create economic opportunity, improve educational achievement, and ensure that people are informed participants in our democracy. Where in the past libraries were the sole source of printed material and information, today there are other for-profit providers who compete with libraries and claim to provide information and books better, cheaper, and faster. The Google book project will digitize significant quantities of out of copyright and in copyright book and out of print content in the not too distant future. Google 411 information service, web-based answer sites (Yahoo answers, askJeeves, answer.com, about.com) provide answers 24/7. Text messaging answer services (ChaCha) respond almost instantly with anything one might want to know delivered directly to a cell phone. The days of the librarian as the gatekeeper to all knowledge are long gone. But that presents wonderful and exciting opportunity for libraries to be reinvented in ways that make them more relevant than ever in today's society.

Residents participating in the November 2007 focus groups were thinking expansively about the role of the Scotch Plains and Fanwood libraries. They want the library to serve as a community gathering place, a center for learning, a technology access center, a source of entertainment, a center for literacy, an information hub and a place for solitude and contemplation. They understand that today's libraries play expanded roles in the life of a community, one of the few remaining public places where people of all ages and backgrounds can come together to learn and grow.

Communities throughout New Jersey are reinvesting in their "downtowns" and central business districts in response to community demand for livable and sustainable communities

---

<sup>6</sup> IBIB, Page 3

<sup>7</sup> IBIB, Page 3



that provide opportunities for local shopping and commerce that is not dependent on automobiles. The establishment of a Special Improvement District (SID) in Scotch Plains and the redevelopment in the Fanwood central business district offers a unique opportunity for a new joint library to become the anchor for that development. Data from other communities demonstrates that new libraries result in significant increase in use and that people typically will combine a visit to the library with visits to retailers, local shopkeepers and restaurants. The synergy of public and for-profit space provides the vitality needed to promote a healthy downtown.

**Now is the time to consider if Fanwood and Scotch Plains are ready to invest in creating a joint library, a library for the future. This is an opportunity for Fanwood and Scotch Plains to lead the way among other New Jersey communities by forming a joint library that will become a focal point for community activity in both communities.**

**There are significant benefits to forming a joint library.**

**1. Together Fanwood and Scotch Plains can provide better library service than they can provide alone.**

A joint library, with pooled funding resources and the resulting economies of scale means that together the two communities can provide library service that would be impossible to provide on their own. The communities have a proven track record of success as demonstrated with the regional school system. A joint library will offer expanded access to great collections guaranteed to satisfy the needs of the community. The joint library will continually adapt its collection to incorporate the latest formats – books, e-books, and digital content on the web, MP3 formats, DVD, audio books, recordable books, downloadable content, and devices to facilitate use of these resources.

**2. Public libraries are more than lending books.**

Public libraries build community. The joint library will serve as a community center – an educational and cultural hub offering innovative programming, classes, seminars, and special events that bring people of all ages and both communities together to share ideas and conversation. Increasingly libraries are seen as their community's front porch or living room, shared community space that is available to all.

**3. Libraries open the door to learning, imagination, and wonder.**

Education does not begin in kindergarten and end with earning a four-year degree -- learning is a lifelong process. A joint library will allow for the expansion of early literacy programs so that every child gets the best possible start in life and enters school ready to read. It will ensure that teens have a place where they can work with their peers on school projects and that adults who need to learn new skills to remain competitive in the workforce have a place to learn throughout their lives.

**4. Libraries offer opportunity for everyone.**

The new joint library will be designed to meet the diverse needs of both communities, including expanded services for children, teens and adults with special needs. Libraries equal the playing field in a way that no other institution in our society can. You don't have to be rich or famous, well educated, or even a native English speaker to get great library service. People of all ages and all cultures view the libraries as places where they can improve their education, learn a new skill, prepare for a

career, learn a language, become a citizen, solve a problem, learn to read, complete a homework assignment, hold a meeting, or make a new friend.

**5. A dynamic, responsive library adds value to the community.**

Libraries increase local property value and enhance the overall quality of life.

**6. Information and technology is not a luxury, it's a necessity.**

The World Wide Web is a great first step to finding information but not everything anyone might ever need is available for free and on the web. Libraries are still a great source of accurate, reliable information. By investing in improved online digital content data and electronic services, the joint library will ensure that people get the information they need when they need it. A joint library will provide technological resources to facilitate communication and collaboration and ensure that residents of Fanwood and Scotch Plains are technologically equipped to be successful in today's hi-tech world.

**7. Libraries need to be convenient and accessible to the community.**

Joining forces will mean that the library can open earlier and close later to meet the needs of those who live and work in town as well as those who commute to work elsewhere and return late in the day. Seven-day-a-week, year-round service will provide top-notch accessibility to the community.

**8. A strong and vibrant library will benefit the local economy.**

The Joint Library will offer services and programming that help make the community attractive for existing businesses, business relocation and their employees. A joint library can support redevelopment efforts and the special improvement district in Scotch Plains and Fanwood.

**9. Tax dollars will go further.**

The economies of scale resulting from maintaining one, energy efficient, green building will mean that taxpayer dollars can be reallocated to increase direct services to library patrons.

**10. Bigger is better.**

The joint library will allow the communities to expand the library collections, providing residents with more books, more films, audio books and other material to satisfy demand and offer more choices. A larger, modern library will provide meeting space for local civic and community groups as well as designated space for teens and tots to learn and grow. Today's libraries are about people – great public spaces that allow people of all ages to interact as a community in the “community's living room”. A joint library will become a destination

# The Case for a Joint Library for Fanwood and Scotch Plains

Over the last few years, communities throughout New Jersey have been seeking ways to reduce the property tax burden on homeowners. New Jersey is a strong home rule state with 566 municipalities, 611 school districts and 312 public libraries. The State, through the Department of Community Affairs, has been supporting public policy and providing funding to municipalities to explore consolidation of government or to create shared municipal services. In the past, public support for these efforts has been lukewarm but skyrocketing taxes coupled with the recent economic downturn are leading to more serious consideration of consolidation.

The Fanwood and Scotch Plains Libraries are great examples of how cooperation can save taxpayers money and result in better service. The library directors, with the support of each community's mayor, have been successful in securing funds from the state to support cooperative projects that allowed each library to improve service. Instead of moving ahead with needed physical improvements in each of their libraries, the library directors worked with their Boards to explore the option of creating a joint library to address the need for improved library service and more modern library facilities.

The physical plants for both libraries have reached the end of their lifecycle. Libraries are typically constructed to have a useful life of 25-30 years, and are in need of significant investment to keep them functional and respond to changing community demands. With a 57 year old building in Fanwood and 41 year old building in Scotch Plains both libraries are far outside the useful life span for their buildings. Although renovation is a possibility for both facilities, the cost of renovating a building and bringing it up to code often exceeds or compares to the cost of new construction. In addition, renovation/expansion projects often result in buildings with inefficient floor plans that still fail to support the vision and mission of the library program.

The time is right to consider building on the successes of the last few years to build a single library to serve residents of both communities. A new, single library would provide the opportunity to improve and expand on existing services, operate in an energy efficient physical plant, take advantage of the talents and skills of both staffs in a single unified system, improve the collection of materials and demonstrate that the libraries are an example of how consolidated services can work.

There are successful examples of joint libraries elsewhere in the state made possible by the 1959 passage of state legislation establishing joint libraries as one of the organizational structures for the establishment and operation of public libraries in the State of New Jersey. Joint libraries serve residents in the communities of Chatham Borough and Township, Chester Borough and Township, Princeton Borough and Township, Morristown and Morris Township, Matawan and Aberdeen, and Bedminster and Far Hills. A copy of the joint library law can be found in Attachment 2.

In the joint library structure, two communities decide to establish a single library to serve the residents of both communities and develop a funding formula to determine the allocation of operating costs to each community. The following chart illustrates the 2006 local tax support and millage rate for New Jersey's six joint libraries.

Joint Library	Pop	2006 Local tax support	2005 Equal Val	Millage 2006 Local Tax	2006 Tax Support per Cap
<b>Matawan/Aberdeen</b>	<b>26,364</b>		<b>2,739,385,920</b>	<b>0.00032487</b>	<b>\$33.27</b>
Matawan	8,910	284,504	872,523,783	0.00032607	\$31.93
Aberdeen	17,454	604,282	1,866,862,137	0.00032368	\$34.62
<b>Bedminster/Far Hills</b>	<b>9,161</b>			<b>0.00033333</b>	<b>\$134.72</b>
Bedminster	8,302	823,438	2,470,285,488	0.00033333	\$99.19
Far Hills	859	146,252	438,756,573	0.00033333	\$170.26
<b>Chathams</b>	<b>18,546</b>			<b>0.000304716</b>	<b>\$74.63</b>
Chatham Boro	8,460	686,837	2,036,303,619	0.000337296	\$81.19
Chatham Twp	10,086	686,549	2,707,306,558	0.000253591	\$68.07
<b>Chester</b>	<b>8,917</b>			<b>0.000362238</b>	<b>\$79.74</b>
Chester Boro	1,635	120,650	308,649,905	0.000391000	\$73.79
Chester Twp	7,282	622,632	1,867,088,957	0.000333477	\$85.50
<b>Morris Town and Twp</b>	<b>40,430</b>			<b>0.000384267</b>	<b>\$70.05</b>
Morristown Town	18,544	939,861	2,448,563,229	0.000383842	\$50.68
Morris Twp	21,796	1,946,931	5,061,002,759	0.000384693	\$89.33
<b>Princeton</b>	<b>30,230</b>			<b>0.000520653</b>	<b>\$108.55</b>
Princeton Boro	14,203	1,007,204	1,954,219,203	0.000515400	\$70.91
Princeton Twp	16,027	2,341,891	4,453,069,822	0.000525906	\$146.20

Source: New Jersey State Library Public Library Statistics, 2006

Fanwood and Scotch Plains library expenditures compared to other joint libraries and to other libraries in Union County reveal the following:

- In 2005, Fanwood allocated .468 mills for library support and Scotch Plains allocated .339 mills as compared to a high of .52 mills for Princeton and a low of .32 mills for Matawan Aberdeen. The average mills for all joint libraries in 2006 were .371, below the average mills spent to support library service in Fanwood and Scotch Plains for that same time period.
- 2006 per capita expenditures for library service in Fanwood were \$62.79 per capita and Scotch Plains spent \$56.45 per capita for an average of \$59.62. In 2006, Summit spent the most per capita for library service in Union County at \$99.06 per capita and Garwood spent the least at \$30.02 per capita. The average per capita expenditure in NJ for library service in 2006 was \$46.51, while the average per capita cost for a joint library during that same time period was \$83.49. Although the per capita expenditure for joint libraries is higher than the state average, dollar for dollar more money is spent on direct service in a joint library since the administrative and facility costs are not duplicated in both communities.
- For the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2009, per capita costs for providing library service will be \$77.87 in Fanwood and \$67.81 in Scotch Plains.

- Joint libraries will not necessarily save money for a community but they provide more efficient delivery of service to residents through the consolidation of services in a single building, reduction of administrative overhead and more direct service per dollar than single municipal libraries.

There are a number of advantages that accrue to communities that come together to form a joint library.

- By combining the business and administrative functions of the library both towns can save on the overhead costs of operating two libraries
- By pooling resources each town can together afford more library than is possible on their own through economies of scale, such as greater purchasing power and more negotiating power for discounts from vendors
- A joint library brings people from both communities together in neutral, safe territory and encourages discourse about important community issues
- A joint library provides the after-school space that reinforces the educational curriculum as well as the friendships that develop in the regional schools
- A larger joint library provides the space needed to support community meetings, additional programs for children, teens and adults, space for technology and other continuing education instruction

There is still much discussion that will need to take place before Fanwood and Scotch Plains residents agree on forming a joint library. It was clear from the November 2007 focus groups that the communities want data that will help them make an informed decision about how to proceed. Based on those discussions, as well as extensive discussion with the two library boards and library directors Library Development Solutions created a written building program for a new, joint library and identified the projected operating costs for a joint library.

**The proposed building size can be discussed, debated, considered, and adapted as the community sees fit based on budget, site and other external considerations. This proposal is intended to be a starting point for discussion and a framework for making decisions about the future, whether that future is a new single joint library or two separate libraries in the current locations with improved physical plants. However, after reviewing the options available to both communities, the consultants recommend that Fanwood and Scotch Plains establish a joint library.**

## Recommendations

Our approach to evaluating the Fanwood and Scotch Plains libraries began with the needs assessment – what is the community telling us they want in their library? Interviews with library staff, an analysis of use statistics, and assessment of the current conditions helped guide our recommendation for expanding the space.

We explored a variety of options for improving library space in both communities including:

- Renovating and expanding the two existing buildings to bring them up to code;

- Renovating and expanding the Scotch Plains Public Library to serve as the new joint library; and,
- Building a new library in a new location or on one of the existing library sites

After weighing the pros and cons associated with each option, Library Development Solutions recommends that Fanwood and Scotch Plains construct a new library of approximately 52,252 square feet on the existing site of the Scotch Plains Public Library. We recommend that the current Scotch Plains site be selected for a number of reasons:

- The site is already dedicated for library use and offers opportunities to expand the library without the significant expense of acquiring new property
- The proximity of free municipal parking would support the needs of the library and business owners and could potentially be expanded with a parking structure to meet increased demand
- A preliminary evaluation of other sites in Fanwood, including the Fanwood Municipal Complex, cannot support a library of the recommended size nor is there another site in either town that is readily available
- The proximity of the Scotch Plains Library site to the town's special improvement district creates an opportunity for synergy between the library and efforts to revitalize the central business district
- The cost of bringing both libraries up to code is significant and renovation and expansion would be limited because of existing site constraints. Each town would need to make a significant investment in renovation and expansion with the outcome likely to be less than optimal in terms of support for the desired library service program
- Maintaining two separate libraries that are physically close to each other, particularly with Fanwood's limited parking, is costly in today's economic climate
- There is likely to be outside federal and/or state funds to support library construction in the next two years. Towns that have made all of the policy decisions and have shovel-ready projects are more likely to receive funds.

In many cases, adding space to an aging building often becomes a more expensive option than building new. Building codes and construction standards have changed considerably since the time the Scotch Plains Public Library was constructed which would require significant investment in bringing the building up to code. The difficulties associated with blending old and new construction often results in libraries that are less efficient and functional.

If the community ultimately decides to build a new library, we further recommend the following:

- Sale of the Fanwood Library for private use to generate income to support the 0or repurpose of the building by the Borough of Fanwood for other municipal uses

- Temporary library service to be available during construction from the Fanwood Library and/or from a temporary store front location in the Scotch Plains business center
- Planning for as much parking as possible adjacent to the library by adapting the existing surface lot so it is more efficient. Consideration should be given to building a parking structure to increase parking capacity.

A 52,252 square foot building would allow the joint library collection to expand to approximately 163,000 items and create seating to accommodate more than 250 people, not including meeting room seats. **Table 5** provides more specific details about the specific functional areas and recommended space proposed for the new joint library.

**Table 5  
Space Recommendations for the  
Fanwood Scotch Plains Joint Library**

Functional Area	Area sq.ft.	Material Capacity	Seats
<b>Entrance/Commons</b>			
Entry	1,000		10
Concierge/welcome	200		
Book Return	250		
Café/Bookstore/Gift Shop	540		16
Circulation Office	800	1,000	4
Circulation Desk	500	500	3
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>3,290</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Adult</b>			
Browsing/Displays	1,180	5,000	6
Adult Media	1,620	15,000	4
Public service desk	330	100	4
Reference/Electronic Resources	2,000	5,000	50
Computer Training Center	695	100	13
Non-Fiction/Fiction Book Stacks	7,300	70,000	10
Reading and Magazines	907	190	26
Business center	300		
Large Print	360	3,000	2
Local History/Archival Collection	700	1,500	15
Quiet Study	480		16
Reference Office	760	100	5
<b>Adult Totals:</b>	<b>16,632</b>	<b>99,990</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>Youth Services</b>			
Service Desk	200		2
Reference, Study & Magazines	800	2,000	20
Parenting	160	200	4

Picture Books and Easy Readers	1,650	7,500	30
Non-fiction/Fiction Book Stacks	4,740	45,000	8
Teen Area & Homework Help Center	950	5,000	18
Story time/crafts	600		50*
Children's Office	580	500	6
<b>Youth Totals:</b>	<b>9,680</b>	<b>60,200</b>	<b>138</b>
<b>Support and Outreach Services</b>			
Group study	750		30
Community Program/Meeting Room	1,750		175
Conference room	375		15
Gallery space	240		8
Quiet room	240		8
Local history room	400	1000	8
Drive up window	400	400	1
<b>Outreach total</b>	<b>4,155</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>245</b>
<b>Admin/Back of House</b>			
Technical Services	1,240	400	8
Network Center/Technology Support	460	100	3
Director's Office	310	100	7
Asst Director	310	100	3
Administrative Services	1,010	100	10
Staff offices	1,200		8
Staff Lounge	400		12
Receiving/Custodial/Storage	600		2
<b>Admin/back of house total:</b>	<b>5,350</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>47</b>
Total Library	39,287	163,890	614
*Non-Assignable Area@33%	12,965		
<b>Grand Totals:</b>	<b>52,252</b>	<b>163,890</b>	<b>614</b>

\*Non-assignable space includes areas such as hallways, entrance and exits, restrooms, closets, etc. Architects typically use a percentage calculation to determine the amount of non-assignable space required ranging from 15% to 40% depending on the building design.

## Building and Operating a Joint Library

### Construction Costs

Assuming a finished library of approximately 52,252 square feet, LDS developed the following cost estimate for the joint library project based on **2009 dollars**. It is important to note that these costs can fluctuate up or down depending on the economic climate and the cost of goods and materials. In typical times, construction costs escalate at approximately 5% per year. The projected building costs may be adjusted depending on final designs developed by the architect, choice of building materials and furnishings. The chart is intended to provide an estimate of what it might cost to expand the library without knowing all the variables at this time.



**Table 6**  
**Projected Construction Costs**  
**for**  
**A Joint Library in Fanwood in Scotch Plains**  
**(2009 dollars)**

**NOTE: Current cost estimates for this geographic area indicate a per square foot construction costs between \$325 -\$350/SF. Based on that, construction costs for a new building would range between \$16.3 to \$17.5 million not including furniture and other costs. Table 6 assumes an average per square foot construction cost of \$337.50.**

	Sq. Feet	Cost	Total
<b>Construction</b>			
New Space	39,287	\$337.50/sf	\$13,259,625
Furniture, finishes and equipment		\$25/sf	\$1,306,300
Non-assignable	12,965	\$337.50/sf	\$4,375,687
Grand total space	52,252		<b>\$18,941,612</b>
<b>Other project costs</b>			
Architect's Fee@ 10%			\$1,800,000
Legal/consultants			\$100,000
Fundraising expenses			\$ 50,000
Teledata			\$150,000
Data conversion			\$75,000
Demolition			\$200,000
Contingency/Miscellaneous			\$500,000
Temporary rental space/storage			\$150,000
Moving costs			\$75,000
<b>Estimated total</b>			<b>\$22,041,612</b>

### **Construction Financing**

Funding for the Joint Library project will most likely be obtained through a combination of public support, revenues realized from the sale of existing property, private contributions and grants from the state and federal government. Sources of funding to support this project include:

- Municipal bonds issued by Fanwood Borough and Scotch Plains to support the project. Municipalities typically issue bonds for payback over 20 -25 years.
- Bonds from the Union County Improvement Authority, which has issued bonds to support other library projects in the County at a more favorable rate than municipal bonds. Issuance of funding from the county would have the added benefit of not affecting the municipalities' bond rating.

- Funding from the State of New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. The DCA has previously provided support for shared services projects. While the state of the economy makes these funds somewhat uncertain for the foreseeable future, a showcase shared service project may attract support in Trenton as a model for other communities.
- Private donations. Many libraries have mounted successful campaigns that have elicited significant contributions to assist in the construction and furnishing of libraries. A feasibility study to determine the potential for private contribution to a joint library project will be completed before identifying a goal for private giving.
- As noted previously, The State of New Jersey authorized \$45 million in construction bonds in 1999 to support library construction. Efforts are underway by the New Jersey Library Association to secure additional funding to support a second round of grants. Outcome of this effort is uncertain as of this writing. However, to apply, the applicant must have a current library building program such as included in this report in place.
- Public/Private Partnership. Some communities have bundled a new library into an overall redevelopment project in association with private developers. Examples of this can be found in Rahway and Plainsboro. The developer agrees to build a new library in return for other considerations.
- Economic stimulus funding at the federal level allocated to states can be used to support library renovation projects in local communities to create jobs and improve local infrastructure. First priority for funding is for “shovel-ready” projects that will provide opportunities for new jobs. It is possible that given the timing on implementing these projects that the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Joint Library project might qualify. The two towns should discuss the project with representatives in state government responsible for the roll-out of the economic stimulus funding for New Jersey.
- The federally-funded Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) is up for reauthorization in 2009. In previous years, funding to support library construction projects was included in the act. Discussions are underway to reincorporate the provision to support library construction in the reauthorized LSTA legislation.

## **Projected Operating Costs for a Joint Library**

The actual operating costs for a joint library to serve the residents of Fanwood and Scotch Plains are difficult to determine until the exact size of the new library is determined and construction takes place. Whether the library is single or multiple-story will drive staffing in one direction or another. Factors such as the type of heating and cooling system chosen, cost of energy, long term impact of the economic crisis and a host of other variables that may change significantly between now and the time the new library opens makes projecting costs a best-guess exercise. In order to project some costs and provide library planners with information to guide the discussion, Library Development Solutions has made a number of assumptions about the proposed Joint Library:

- The joint library will be open 9am to 9pm, Monday through Thursday, 9am to 6pm on Friday and Saturday, and 1pm to 6pm on Sundays in order to offer more service hours. This will be a year round schedule with no variation for the summer months.
- The library will be open with the exception of these legal holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Birthday, President's Day, Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- If and when the two independent libraries combine to form a joint library, there will be every effort made to retain current employees. When appropriate there may be incentives to encourage those close to retirement to leave. Any reductions in force will occur through attrition. As each position opens, it will be reevaluated to determine what skills and talents are needed to provide service. The joint library will opt out of the NJ Civil Service System and become an at-will employer as provided for in State legislation.
- The staff workweek will remain at 35 hours per week. The benefits package (vacation, sick leave, personal days, holidays, and health insurance) will be negotiated at the time the new library forms. Some savings in health benefits are likely to be achieved if the joint library becomes part of the NJ State Health Benefits program.
- Fanwood and Scotch Plains will adopt a cost-sharing formula for the operation of the joint library that allocates costs fairly between both communities.

**Table 7** compares the current staffing levels for the Scotch Plains and Fanwood libraries to projected staffing for a joint library. In instances where a full time staff member splits his or her time among several organizational units, that individual has been counted as a full time in the area of the library where he or she has organizational responsibility. There are several new positions that are anticipated in the new joint library: technology assistants, Information technology director, building manager, assistant director, programming coordinator, and marketing and public relations associate. These positions may be filled by existing personnel who have the appropriate skills or by recruiting new talent.

In terms of the number of individuals required for each of the library's major functional units this is a projected staffing level recommended until we have more data about anticipated library use and hours of operation.

**Table 7  
Current and Projected Staffing  
Fanwood Scotch Plains Joint Library**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Fanwood 2009</b>	<b>Scotch Plains 2009</b>	<b>Joint Library Proposed</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Administration</b>				
Director	1 FT	1 FT	1 FT	Current directors would share the dir and asst dir
Asst Director	0	0	1 FT	Could be assigned to handle building tasks
Building manager	0	0	1 FT	New position
Business office	1 FT	1 FT	2 FT	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2 FT</b>	<b>2 FT</b>	<b>5 FT</b>	
<b>Circulation</b>				
Supervisor		1 FT MLS	1 FT	Do not require MLS for future
Lib assts	1 FT	3 FT	4 FT	
Lib assts	4 PT	7 PT	9 PT	Reassign two PT to tech assts
Shelvers	1248 hrs	1800 hrs	1800 hrs	Part timers
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1 FT, 4 PT</b>	<b>4 FT, 7 PT</b>	<b>5 FT, 9 PT</b>	
<b>Adult Services</b>				
Supervisor		1 FT MLS	1 FT MLS	Reference and reader services
Librarians		1 FT MLS	1 FT MLS	Reference and reader services
Librarian		2 PT MLS	5 PT MLS	Reference and reader services
Lib assts	1 FT		2 PT	Positions for public service and support
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1 FT</b>	<b>2 FT, 2 PT</b>	<b>2 FT, 7 PT</b>	
<b>Youth Services</b>				
Supervisor	1 FT MLS	1 FT MLS	1 FT MLS	
Teen Librarian		1 FT MLS	1 FT MLS	
Librarians			1 FT MLS	
Library assts		1 FT	1 FT	
Library assts	2 PT	2 PT	2 PT	2 PT to be reassigned
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1 FT, 2 PT</b>	<b>3 FT, 2 PT</b>	<b>4 FT, 2 PT</b>	
<b>Tech Services</b>				
Supervisor		1 MLS*	1 FT MLS	Investigate outsourcing options in this
Catalogers	1 PT MLS	2 PT MLS	2 PT	
Lib assts		1 FT	1 FT	
Library assts		2 PT	2 PT	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1 PT</b>	<b>1 FT, 4 PT</b>	<b>1 FT, 4 PT</b>	
<b>Technology Supp.</b>				
IT support	Contract	Contract	1 FT	FT position to manage all technology
Tech Aides	0	0	3 PT	2 PT reallocated from circ to provide public service
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1 FT, 3 PT</b>	
<b>Comm. Outreach</b>				
Programming	0	0	1 FT	Adult and children's program planning
Marketing/PR	0	0	1 PT	Publicity and graphic support
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1 FT, 1 PT</b>	
<b>Maintenance</b>				
			Contract	
<b>TOTAL FT</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	
<b>TOTAL PT</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>26</b>	

**Table 8** provides estimates about costs of operating the new joint library in **2009 dollars**. The following assumptions were used to project costs:

- Full and part time staff costs were calculated using the 2009 projected expenditures plus new positions and an average salary of \$45,000 for FT and hourly wage of \$15/hour for part timers working on average 20 hours per week
- Fringe benefits were calculated by adding 30% to the staff expense total
- Gas and electric costs were calculated at \$3/square foot. Depending on the HVAC system chosen this could be significantly less if not relying on fossil fuel sources

**Table 8  
Joint Library  
Projected Operating Costs**

Budget Line	Fanwood 2009 Projected	Scotch Plains 2009 Projected	Joint Library proposed
<b>Salaries</b>			
Full time	\$188,665	\$530,000	\$855,000
Part time	\$79,665	\$156,066	\$405,600
Severance	0	\$10,000	0
Sunday hours	0	\$18,056	Regular pay
FICA, etc.			\$126,000
Health and other benefits	\$69,764 **	\$326,403	\$378,180
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$338,084</b>	<b>\$1,040,525</b>	<b>\$1,764,780</b>
<b>Library Materials</b>			
Adult	\$30,500	\$66,000	\$125,000
Young Adult	\$9,800	0	\$10,000
Children	\$20,500	\$35,000	\$30,000
Reference	\$1,500	\$15,000	\$15,000
Subscriptions – print	\$5,200	\$13,000	\$17,000
Subscriptions – digital		\$15,000	\$10,000
DVDs	\$4,800	\$25,000	\$20,000
CDs		\$6,000	\$6,000
Audiobooks	\$3,500		\$6,000
Book supplies	\$2,150	\$14,000	\$12,000
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$77,950</b>	<b>\$189,000</b>	<b>\$251,000</b>
<b>Technology</b>			
Software maintenance	\$17,500	\$14,500	\$20,000
Hardware maintenance	\$1,500	\$11,000	\$10,000
Software licenses			\$5,000
Telecommunications	\$2,500	\$3,500	\$5,000
Hardware/Equip	\$1,500	\$5,000	Capital exp
Computer supplies	\$1,000		\$4,000
Internet access			\$2,500
Technology support	\$2,500		\$2,500
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$26,500</b>	<b>\$34,000</b>	<b>\$49,000</b>
<b>Admin Costs</b>			
Office supplies	\$6,200	\$13,000	\$10,000
Equipment/Copiers		\$6,000	\$7,500

Equip Repairs		\$1,000	\$1,000
Postage	\$1,250 **	\$3,200	\$3,500
Advertising		\$350	\$1,000
Marketing/Planning		\$2,500	\$10,000
Misc.	\$750	\$5,000	\$5,000
Insurance – bldg	\$31,938 **		\$50,000
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$40,138</b>	<b>\$31,050</b>	<b>\$88,000</b>
<b>Programs/PR</b>			
Adult	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$9,000
Children	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$9,000
Summer	\$3,000	\$5,000	
Printing		\$1,000	\$2,500
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>	<b>\$12,500</b>	<b>\$20,500</b>
<b>Professional Development</b>			
Staff training		\$1,500	\$1,500
Staff memberships	\$750	\$1,000	\$1,500
LUCC memberships	\$200	\$200	\$150
NJLA membership	\$150	\$500	\$250
Tuition/trustees	\$600	\$600	\$750
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$1,700</b>	<b>\$3,800</b>	<b>\$4,150</b>
<b>Utilities</b>			
Telephone	\$3,950 **	\$8,000	\$6,500
Gas	\$5,866 **	\$20,000	\$70,000
Electric	\$6,765 **	\$45,000	\$70,000
Water	\$308 **	\$1,200	\$1,500
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$16,889</b>	<b>\$74,200</b>	<b>\$148,000</b>
<b>Maintenance/Contracts</b>			
HVAC contract	\$1,250	\$2,400	\$2,500
HVAC repair		\$4,000	\$2,500
Pest control	\$750	\$480	\$750
Bottled water		\$700	\$650
Cleaning	\$25,000 *	\$26,000	\$40,000
Elevator		\$3,000	\$1,500
Repairs/parts	\$2,750	\$15,000	\$3,500
Equipment		\$8,000	\$2,500
Janitorial supplies	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,500
Fire protection		\$350	\$1,000
Garbage		\$1,300	\$3,600
Landscaping	\$13,386 **	\$5,000	\$5,000
Furnishings			\$5,000
ADT		\$3,500	\$5,000
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$44,136</b>	<b>\$70,730</b>	<b>\$76,000</b>
Billing/Accounting/Audit	\$5,243 **	\$2,000	\$15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$558,640</b>	<b>\$1,457,805</b>	<b>\$2,416,430</b>

**Total expenditures include Operating, State Aid, Trustee and Friends contributions**

\* Borough estimate

\*\* Additional expenditures by Fanwood Borough not reflected in library budget

## Conclusion

The Fanwood and Scotch Plains Libraries are well-respected, highly-valued community resources that have demonstrated the success of collaboration and the benefit they bring to library users. The libraries continue to experience significant increase in use, a clear indication that the communities served endorse and support the importance of library services in their everyday lives.

The typical life span of a library is approximately 25 years. After that time period, it is necessary to reassess space, to consider areas in need of improvement and updating, and to take action to ensure that the library facility has the capacity to support the library's vision and mission in serving the community. The age of both the Fanwood (57 years) and Scotch Plains (42 years) libraries means that it is time to look ahead and consider what needs to happen next to ensure that this vital community resource is well-positioned to serve the needs of the next generation of library users.

The space recommendations included in this report will ensure that the new joint library is fully functional and responsive to the community's needs for years to come. The formation of a joint library in Fanwood and Scotch Plains will provide leadership and encourage other communities in the state to consider similar arrangements. **All factors lead to the conclusion that it is now the time to take the next step in a collaborative partnership that enhances both communities and speaks effectively to the current trend of shared service by building a joint library to serve the current and next generation of users.**

# Attachment 1

## Library Design Principles

### Library Design

Library design has undergone significant changes in the last 20 years. In the past libraries were built to warehouse books and other physical materials, with the primary driving force in design being to develop space that would allow collections to grow. The great reading rooms of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century gave way to uninspired library spaces one often encounters in libraries built in the 60's, 70's, and 80's – buildings that reflected the architecture and design ethic of the times. Little attention was given to creating spaces that would invite people to linger in libraries. Much of that changed in the 1990's and early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as these mid-century libraries began to be replaced with new buildings that responded to the changing needs of users. Although books remain important bedrock of libraries for now and the foreseeable future, increasingly librarians and architects began to understand that people seek out libraries for a variety of reasons that are not all reading or book related.

The introduction of public access computing in libraries attracted thousands of people who were lapsed users or non-users. Adult, children's and teen programming brought in another group of people who might not have ventured into a library before, and the growing demand for information services increased demand for digital and physical content. Library use has been soaring in the US for the last decade with no foreseeable end in sight, in fact in times of economic downturns library use grows significantly more.

There are wonderful examples of redesigned suburban and city libraries in NJ and throughout the US that one can look at for inspiration – in New Jersey, Princeton, Cherry Hill, Monroe Township, Montclair, Franklin, Franklin Lakes and further a field in Greenwich, Darien and Fairfield in Connecticut, Suffern, NY, Seattle, and Salt Lake City. In October 2008 The New York Public Library announced its intention to remodel the 42<sup>nd</sup> street library with \$250 million worth of improvements to make it a more user-friendly facility capable of welcoming all. **There is significant reinvestment in libraries underway throughout the US signifying a commitment to the importance of libraries to the overall quality of community life.**

Modern library design incorporates these features:

### User Seating

A variety of user seating options including:

- Study tables with data and power ports to accommodate quiet study
- Individual study carrels with low sides and backs and data and power ports
- Comfortable lounge chairs in adult browsing and magazine areas
- Teen friendly furniture that can be easily moved for new groupings
- Child friendly furniture, scaled to accommodate the size of younger children
- Computer work stations that accommodate one or two users at a time
- Adult reading areas that are separate from the children's and teen areas so adults can read in an undisturbed environment



## **Collection Space**

Today's library users want current collections of materials that are easily accessible.

Desirable features for shelving the collection in a new library include:

- Shelving heights that do not exceed 84 inches with a commitment to keep the top shelves free of material, 42 - 48" shelves for the reference collection, 60" shelving for children's fiction and non-fiction, and 42" shelving or book bins for the youngest readers
- Display shelving for new books and media designed to attract attention and encourage browsing and checkout
- Dedicated space for large print books and audio books
- Sloped shelving for the bottom shelves so browsers can easily see the titles of books
- Slat wall panels on the end of book stacks for display of library materials
- Magazine display units similar to those found in newsstands or book stores
- Media display units that provide for face out display of CDs, DVDs, and videos
- Display tables for merchandising high demand titles or featured collections

## **Magazine and New Book Area**

Most libraries find that much of the circulation can be attributed to the items in their new book area. Library users gravitate to the newest items with a desire to read the best sellers as well as other books that are being talked about by their friends, on TV and in the press. Once new materials are shelved with older items in the collection their circulation drops significantly.

Features to include in the new book and browsing area are:

- Custom designed shelving that allows for display of high demand materials
- Display tables that allow for merchandising of new and other featured materials
- Magazine display units that allow for easy access
- Reading areas that invite adults to spend time – comfortable chairs grouped around a wonderful window view or fireplace

## **Youth Services Area**

A new library should include:

- A separate children's room for children ranging from infants to 6<sup>th</sup> grade with walls or soundproof material to separate this area from the rest of the building, yet allow for visual supervision
- An area where pre-school children and their parents can explore books, educational puzzles and toys
- Child sized seating and a variety of options – little tables and chairs, intermediate sized tables and chairs, chalk tables, picture book tables, loveseats for parent child reading, small moveable benches or bean bag seats
- A computer cluster reserved for children and tables with data and power ports
- Low book shelves, display areas, picture book bins
- "Gallery" space for display of children's materials
- A story and crafts area for story hours, storytelling events and special programs just for kids

## **Teen Area**

The library expansion needs to include space specifically for teens -- an area away from adults and children, yet readily visible to the library staff and easily supervised. This area should have:

- Space for pre-teens and teens to relax and chat with their friends without bothering other library users
- Comfortable, moveable seating designed to meet the needs of teens
- An area for teen books, media and magazines
- Computers reserved for teens in an Internet café type of environment
- An area for games
- An area where “latch key” children can work on homework

## **Public Service Area**

Depending on the design and layout of a library there may be several public service points. Typically there would be a “welcome/concierge/information kiosk” to guide people through the building, a checkout area for library transactions, a reference/information area and youth services area.

Each of these public service points should be easily identifiable, approachable, and welcoming with signage indicating the function. The service desks should incorporate flexible design so they can be reconfigured easily to adapt to changing needs and use mobile components to accommodate drawers, shelves, files, etc. Depending on the ultimate size and layout of the building designers should consider small computer kiosks where staff could provide service. Similarly staff could be equipped with tablet PCs or PDA's that could be used to answer questions while they roam around the service floor.

Increasingly libraries are augmenting the checkout function with self-check out stations. These stations should be located adjacent to the checkout desk so staff can be called on for assistance and troubleshooting.

## **Technology**

The shift from physical to digital content, particularly in the area traditionally reserved for the reference collection requires library planners to think differently about space. New libraries need to provide an ample number of workstations specifically designated for adults, children and teens. Technology features that should be integrated into library design include:

- A wireless network that allows users to obtain access to the Internet if they have a laptop and a wireless card
- Tables equipped with data ports and power to allow people to bring their own laptops to the library and gain access to a high speed Internet connection.
- Floor plugs and data ports throughout the library space so laptop users can find a place to work
- A technology training center that allows for hardware and software instruction
- A language study center with self paced ESL software loaded on computers to assist people who are learning English to work at their own pace.
- Flat screen monitors and workstations that that allow patrons to save data

- Adaptive technology that provides for larger computer monitors to assist those with poor eyesight and listening devices for the hearing impaired
- Specially configured early literacy workstations for children
- Digital videoconferencing or web casting equipment
- Podcasting and videostreaming capabilities
- Capacity for library users to watch a movie or listen to a CD either at a workstation or designated media screening area
- Flat screen televisions that can be used for announcements and other special events
- An public address system for announcements and alerts

### **Program Space**

Today's library users are seeking a variety of meeting spaces, which may require gathering space for large meetings or spaces that can accommodate smaller groups. The new library should incorporate:

- A community meeting room that can accommodate up to 175 people audience style. This space should be designed so it can be accessible after normal library hours.
- Small group study rooms that can seat 4-6 people for private meetings and group study
- Gallery space adjacent for art and other exhibits.
- Separate space that can be used for children's story hours and crafts
- A café or vending area where library users can meet informally with others and enjoy a cup of coffee or bite to eat
- A quiet room or area for those who would like to work without the distractions of cell phones and computers

## **Attachment 2**

### **New Jersey Library Law - Joint Libraries**

#### **N.J.S.A. 40:54-29.3. Support, maintenance and control of joint free public library; libraries considered free public libraries**

Any 2 or more municipalities may unite in the support, maintenance and control of a joint free public library for the use and benefit of the residents of such municipalities.

Every library established under this chapter shall be considered a free public library as defined under R.S. 40:54-1 et seq. and shall have the same benefits, powers, duties and responsibilities granted to free public libraries and their governing boards of trustees.

L.1959, c. 155, p. 619, § 1. Amended by L.1988, c. 38, § 1.

#### **N.J.S.A. 40:54-29.4. Joint library agreement; contents**

The governing bodies of such municipalities shall propose such an undertaking by a joint library agreement, which shall provide for the apportionment of annual and special appropriations therefore among such municipalities, for the initial annual appropriation for such library, for the abandonment or the continuance of such agreement in the event that it is not approved by all such municipalities as provided for in this act, and for such other matters as they shall determine. Such apportionment of appropriations may be based on the assessed valuations of the respective municipalities, their populations, or such factor or factors as the governing bodies shall agree.

Such an agreement shall provide that the combined minimum appropriation for the joint library shall annually be not less than one-third of a mill on every dollar of assessable property within the participating municipalities based upon the equalized valuation of such property within the combined municipalities as certified by the Director of the Division of Taxation in the Department of the Treasury.

L.1959, c. 155, p. 619, § 2. Amended by L.1988, c. 38, § 2.

#### **N.J.S.A. 40:54-29.5. Joint library agreement, filing**

After the introduction of an ordinance approving such Joint library agreement, which may be incorporated by reference therein, such agreement shall be and remain on file for public inspection in the municipal clerk's office from the time of introduction of such ordinance and such ordinance shall so state. A copy of such ordinance and of the Joint library agreement shall be filed with the State Librarian and the Director of the Division of Local Government. Subsequent amendments and supplements to such ordinance and agreement shall be filed in like manner.

L.1959, c. 155, p. 619, § 3. Amended by L.2001, c.137, § 56.

**N.J.S.A. 40:54-29.6. Notification of governing bodies after adoption of ordinance; submission of question to voters**

After the adoption of such ordinance, each governing body shall notify each of the other governing bodies proposing to unite in the joint library of such adoption. After the adoption of such ordinances by all such governing bodies, the question of uniting in such undertaking shall be submitted to the legal voters of each such municipality at the next general election unless said election is less than 40 days after the adoption of such ordinances, in which event it shall be submitted at the next succeeding general election.

L.1959, c. 155, p. 619, § 4.

**N.J.S.A. 40:54-29.7. Form of ballot**

Such question shall be placed upon the official ballots in each of the participating municipalities in substantially the following form:

"Shall . . . (insert the name of one municipality) . . . unite with . . . (insert the name or names of the other municipality or municipalities) . . . in the support, maintenance and control of a joint free public library pursuant to chapter . . . (insert the chapter number of this act) . . . of the laws of 1959?"

L.1959, c. 155, p. 620, § 5.

**N.J.S.A. 40:54-29.8. Effect of majority approval**

These municipalities in which at said election the question is approved by a majority of the legal votes cast in each, both for and against such question, shall, as of January 1 next following said election, unite in the support, maintenance and control of a joint free public library in accordance with such joint library agreement.

L.1959, c. 155, p. 620, § 6. Amended by L.1988, c. 38, § 3.

**N.J.S.A. 40:54-29.9. Amendment of joint library agreement; approval by ordinance**

The joint library agreement may be amended by agreement among the parties thereto but such amendments shall not become effective until approved in each of the participating municipalities by ordinance, which ordinances may incorporate such amendments by reference.

L.1959, c. 155, p. 621, § 7.