

### **III. COMMUNITY ANALYSIS**

Section IV and the Appendix contain the Strategic Plan for Lowndes County Library. It includes detailed Goals and Objectives as well as demographics for the county. The South Georgia Regional Library System includes the system headquarters in Lowndes County. The Lowndes County Library will serve as a popular materials library focusing on best sellers, popular reading items, and periodicals; another strong emphasis will be on youth services. The library will expand its reference and genealogy materials. Users will have access to computers and the Internet at the Lowndes County Library; wireless access will be provided throughout the facility and instruction will be provided.

#### **A. Individuals Involved with this Project**

##### Library Staff Representatives

Kelly Lenz, Library Director  
Wynette Dobard, Business Manager  
Terri Prout, Executive Assistant  
Halley Little, Community Relations and Development Manager  
Sean Strickland, Network Administrator  
Jennifer Tyler, Teen Library Associate

##### Regional Library Board of Trustees

Ray Devery, Regional Board Chair  
Stefani Carroll, Board Member  
Rabbi Moshe Elbaz, Board Member  
Kay Harris, Board Member  
Helen Lester, Board Member  
Wyn Miller, Board Member and Attorney

**Funding Agencies.** This construction project will be funded through a Special Local Option Sales Tax [SPLOST] referendum and the state grant; private donations, bequests and naming opportunities may be included in the funding. Public funding for continued operations will be provided by the County Commission.

## **B. Project Location**

The project is located in the Five Points area of Valdosta, is served by community bus lines, and is on a busy roadway. Because of other facilities planned for this area, it is an ideal location for a public library.

## **C. Population, Growth Rate and Demographic Characteristics**

Based on figures from the 2000 census, the Lowndes County Library currently serves approximately 108,000 people with projected population growth to 119,000 by 2015. According to the census, the population is 67 percent white, 22 percent black and the balance Hispanic or “other.” The county enjoyed a 15.8 percent growth from 1990 to 2000 and a 9 percent change from 2000 to 2010. By 2010, the percentage of children under 5 years old is 8.1% whereas the state average is 7.5%; under 18 is 24.7 % in comparison to the state average of 26.2%. Older adults over age 65 comprised 9.7% of the population in comparison to the state average of 10.3%. All other age groups are slightly higher than the state’s averages.

Median household income within the county was \$27,310 in 1999; this had climbed to \$28,770 by 2003 and to \$29,599 by 2006 but remained well below the state’s median 2006 household income of \$42,679. The unemployment rate averaged 8.6%

between 2000 and 2004 which is above the state's average for the period; there were 920 families receiving food stamps. Population living below the poverty level in 2004 was 19.4% and additionally, the number of children living below poverty levels was 21.7%. These numbers indicate serious economic challenges for Lowndes County.

Poverty is also indicated by educational attainment. In 2000, 26.8% of the county's population had not completed high school. However, at the same time 63.3% were high school graduates; 28% of this group had some college; and 8.9% had an Associate's Degree or higher level education.

By 2006-2007, 72.3% of high school students graduated in four years and 60.7% of those graduates were eligible for the HOPE scholarship. While the graduation rate is slightly lower than the state average of 76.2%, the Board of Education is making significant gains in this area. The number of students eligible to receive services through the Migrant Education program totaled 48 which indicates a very small migrant population.

#### **D. Types of Industry and Trade**

The economy is focused on the service industry, the military and education. Moody Air Force Base is the county's largest employer followed by the South Georgia Medical Center, Valdosta State University, and the Lowndes County School District. Wiregrass Technical College is located in Valdosta. Tourism and recreational opportunities also provide contributions to the local economy. Valdosta and Lowndes County serve as the educational and economic hub for South Georgia, providing health, medical and job opportunities for those living in the area.

## **E. Interpretation of Data**

Space analysis is based on data from a variety of sources that indicate current demographics and projected county growth. With a population of approximately 130,000 people by the year 2020, existing space of 15,618 square feet [McMullen Southside Library, Salter Hahira Library, and Johnston Lakes Library], the proposal for a 62,000 square foot facility was developed. This enables the Library to meet current Georgia Capital Outlay minimum requirements of .6 square feet per capita and to provide Georgia Library Service Standards space for 2 books per capita.

The demographic data indicates a slightly higher than average population of children under 18 years of age including young children and also a minimally higher than average population of adults over age 65. This building program includes a Children's Library which focuses on the family, includes special features for children, and offers reading space and computers. It also includes a Genealogy and local history area and space for family history which may be of interest to older residents. The addition of more chair/table space and lounge chair space may meet the community's need to be able to select books and then sit to review materials before checking them out. In addition, the service goals include Information Literacy which will provide classes for people to learn how to use computers and to analyze information.

The low household income indicates that people in the County can rely on the Library for services such as internet access and new books and periodicals that a more affluent community may not require. By providing best sellers, current periodicals and access to information, the Library meets definite needs that will be enhanced by a new facility. Economic development roles may be fulfilled by providing the meeting room

space, access to computers, and job information. With the area's current unemployment rates, this is a vital service. Many businesses now accept job applications only electronically; libraries provide information resources on jobs, resume preparation, and application completion as well as providing small business information.

## **F. Site Analysis**

The Lowndes County Library will be located at Five Points in Valdosta near a community center and high traffic patterns. Desirable site characteristics include high visibility, easily accessed from major traffic arteries, expansion capability, avoidance of low-lying areas or flood plain, and located near businesses and shopping.

The basics of site planning include a survey and engineering evaluation, including geo-hydro testing, the building footprint, walkways, parking, drainage and stormwater management, and landscaping and other exterior opportunities. Good site planning takes into account issues that go beyond those traditionally considered for the design and construction of libraries. The choices made during this phase impact the entire spectrum of construction goals.

The chart below summarizes planning considerations. The process begins with developing an understanding of a potential site by assessing existing ecological conditions. These include geology and soil type, topography, water amount, flow and quality; vegetation and habitat; and climate. Additional site assessment elements include service areas, access and circulation, size and shape of the site; construction materials, tools and staffing. The proposed site provides adequate parking and a natural

amphitheater which may be used for special activities and outdoor reading features as the site develops.

The library facility should respond to the site. Building placement, orientation, massing and layout decisions made early in the design process will affect the energy impacts of the building. These decisions also will impact the outdoor environment since they capture or lose opportunities for daylighting and natural ventilation.

<b><i>GOAL</i></b>	<b><i>SITE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS</i></b>
1. Energy Efficiency	Energy efficiency through effective building location, orientation and massing, and the placement of vegetation for shade or wind protection.
2. Water Efficiency	Water-efficient plant materials and landscaping design that can survive and evolve with intensive use. Responsible water management through the creative use of green roofs, gray water systems.
3. Protection of the Natural Ecosystem	The majority of site planning decisions will directly affect the overall level of impact to the natural environment. Water conservation, treatment of surface water, building orientation, preservation and restoration of natural habitats, use of native plants and appropriate landscaping materials.
4. Acoustic, Thermal & Visual Comfort	Reduction of the heat island effect and need for air conditioning by minimizing hard surfaces to essential zones or combining hard surfaces for multiple uses; using trees or shade structures; using paving materials that help return water to the ground. Orientation of windows, reflective surfaces, and potentials for visual and thermal comfort. Relationship of building to sources of noise such as roadways for acoustic comfort.
5. Health & Indoor Air Quality	Opportunities for natural ventilation; reduction of carbon dioxide by vegetation.
6. Safety and Security	Site safety and security by the placement of landscaping, use of courtyards, well planned access, & circulation points.
7. Connection to the Neighborhood	Partnerships with local nonprofit groups for fundraising, special events, shared facilities, maintenance, etc.