



# Willow Library Replacement and Community Center Upgrades Project Development Plan



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Prepared by the Foraker Group  
Pre-Development Program

Available online at <http://bit.ly/WillowPDP>

## Project Development Plan

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Willow Library Project Development Plan has been produced as a component of the Foraker Group Pre-Development Program. The Pre-Development Program is sponsored by the Rasmuson Foundation, Denali Commission, Mat-Su Health Foundation and the Alaska Mental Health Trust with the intent to assist non-profit organizations in planning for sustainable capital projects.

The Foraker Group's Pre-Development team consisted of the following:

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Collaboration and input were provided by the Willow Library Association, Library Volunteers, the Willow Area Community Organization (WACO), and community members at large, including but not limited to:

- Marian Charles
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- Carol Goltz
- Bill Mailer
- Mark Merrill
- Stephanie Richey
- Virginia Richey
- Bonnie Warner
- George Wilkie
- Julie Mitchell, Librarian
- Val Schachle (WACO)
- Randall Kowalke, Assembly Representative
- Vern Halter, Mayor
- Hugh Leslie, Director of Recreational Services and Libraries

Throughout the Pre-Development Process, many other community members have attended and participated in Feasibility Committee meetings including: Andy Anderson, Carrie Smolden, Roni Widner, Brenda McCain, Doyle Holmes, Tom Phillips, Bill Arterburn, Vincent Veit, Kay Daily, Karen Kowalke, Steve Charles and Carol Wilkie. A special community meeting, well attended, was held to solicit input from the entire community.



Willow's young readers make themselves comfortable.

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- Attachment C: HMS Construction Cost Estimate
- Attachment D: Concept Design by Wolf Architecture
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project is to replace and expand the existing Willow Library and provide major maintenance upgrades to the Community Center. Willow, Alaska is located approximately 70 miles north of Anchorage.

The existing Willow Library is immediately adjacent to the Willow Community Center, sharing an arctic entry, lobby and toilet facilities. This arrangement works well. However, the Library's current 3,050 square foot "footprint" is too small to meet the Library's needs. This project is to demolish the existing Library footprint and replace it with 6,635 square feet of new construction, while still sharing the aforementioned spaces with the Community Center.

The increased Library space will provide a much improved line of sight from the circulation desk (promoting safety), provide a Teen Area (for young adults no longer attracted to the Children's collections and not yet ready for the Adult collections), provide a small group study room, provide a multi-purpose room with seating for 30, appropriately accommodate current information technologies with connectivity and power supply, allow lower and wider spaced stacks, and be fully compliant with ADA.

The Community Center portion of the structure, originally built in 1984, is in need of major maintenance upgrades, such as a sprinkler system, toilet room upgrades, and siding. A facility survey has been conducted and identified the areas requiring attention. It is appropriate and cost effective to address these issues at the same time as the Library replacement.

A concept design has been completed in the Foraker Group's Pre-Development Program. Based on that concept design, construction costs have been estimated. The estimated project cost to replace the Library is \$4,300,000, excluding the value of the land and pre-development costs. The estimated cost to provide the maintenance upgrades to the Community Center is \$1,360,000. The combined project total is \$5,660,000.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough (Borough) owns the entire facility and operates the public Library. The Willow Area Community Association (WACO) manages the Community Center under an agreement with the Borough. Similar to the new Sutton Library and the new Talkeetna Library, the Borough intends to fund the project with a combination of State of Alaska funds, Borough funds, grants from foundations and individual donations.

The estimated increase in Library operating expenses is approximately \$18,000 per year in 2016 dollars. Two areas of increase will be additional electrical usage and property insurance. Janitorial services will increase, but that will be determined through the operating agreement with WACO.

## PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

### A. ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

Willow, Alaska is a quiet community of about 2,100 residents located 70 road miles from Anchorage and straddling the Parks Highway. According to the 2010 U.S. Census Data, Willow median household income is \$56,600 with approximately 10% of its residents living below poverty level.

Willow's first residents were people of the Den'aina tribe or Athabascans. There was a large influx of white men in the 1800's, mostly Russians and some Scandinavians, who trapped or prospected for gold. A new wave of exploration occurred after Alaska was purchased by the US Government in 1863. Willow further grew after the 1897 discovery of gold in the area and with the completion of the Alaska Railroad in 1920, according to the *Willow Area Community Comprehensive Plan, Adopted August, 2013*.

After Alaska achieved statehood in 1959, there was a land rush to the Willow area. That year, growth in Willow was further supported by the first elementary school and construction start of the Parks Highway.



Willow, Alaska is located about 70 road miles north of Anchorage.

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Willow is an unincorporated community served by the Mat-Su Borough (Borough). There are two schools: Willow Elementary (Pre-K through 6) and Beryozova (K through 12). Willow has its own Post Office and is served by three public airports, two of which are seaplane bases. According to the FAA, Willow also has 13 private landing strips. Primary care is provided by a local health clinic. The Fire Department is staffed by Borough employees and assisted by volunteers. The Willow Library is operated by the Borough and is collocated with the Community Center.

**B. ABOUT THE LIBRARY**

The Willow Library traces its roots back to pre-statehood in 1959. It began with donated books set up as an exchange at White's Crossing, a small business complex located at mile 66 of the Parks Highway. Later, the Willow Area Civic Organization, WACO, established a Library committee, and moved the books into the log Community Building for a short time. The Library was operated by volunteers one or two afternoons a week.

In the early 60s a separate Library Association was established. Community volunteers constructed a small facility in the Willow townsite (approximately Mile 69 Parks Hwy) in 1966. Unfortunately, disaster struck with the first snowfall, when the roof collapsed, destroying much of the collection. The Library was rebuilt in the same location in 1969 with Centennial Year funds used to cover a portion of the cost. June Newman served as head librarian at this location for many years.



Willow Library, circa 1969.

In the late 1980s Borough officials deemed the existing Library structure as nearing the end of its useful life. The two-level building was not handicap accessible and the first floor was unable to safely support the weight of the growing collection.

With the completion of the Alyeska Pipeline and flush with oil revenue, the State Legislature began investing in civic structures. WACO was well positioned to represent the Willow area and secure funding for a new Community Center. However, the Borough possessed the infrastructure and skill sets to manage the state grant, and secure design and construction services. At this point the Borough assumed ownership of the Community Center including the 14.5 acre site and the doors were opened in 1983.

The Borough and WACO continue to have a management agreement, revisited every four years, that addresses the division of both financial and physical responsibilities for the upkeep and use of the current building.

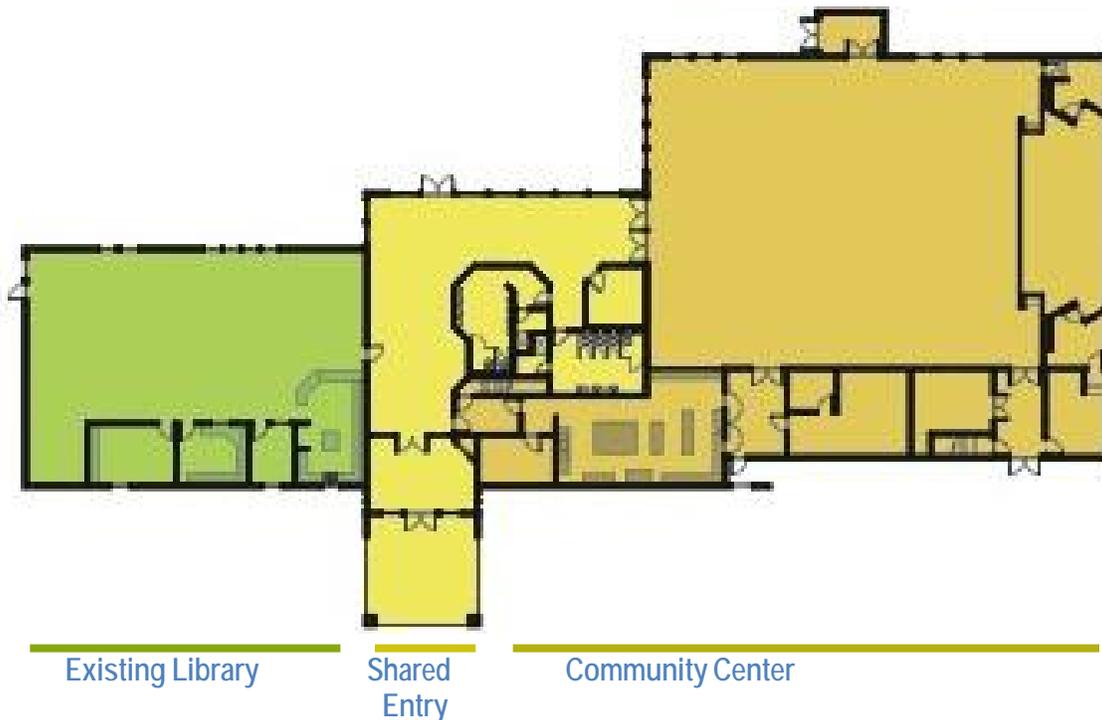
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The campaign for a new Library culminated successfully on May 17, 1992, with the grand opening of the current 3,050 square foot facility that adjoins the Willow Community Center at Mile 69.5 on the Parks Highway. It is located just east of Willow Lake and enjoys a lovely view of the lake in a park-like setting. Head librarians in the current facility have included Ann Dixon, Nicole Pease and Julie Mitchell. At the time of construction, the agreement between WACO and the Borough was updated to reflect this major addition. See Attachment B: Borough/WACO Agreement.



The existing Willow Library is the low structure on the left. The Community Center is the taller structure on the right. The entry is shared.





"Halloween Heroes" stalking the stacks!



Patrons using public computers at the crowded workstations.

The current Library has nearly 30,000 items in its collections and provides access to 49 different licensed databases. (Further details of the collections will be discussed later in this document.) The 2015 circulation was a healthy 70,134 items. 41,600 of the circulated items were attributable to electronic materials including e-books, audio recordings, and videos. Patrons accessed the Library's public computers for over 4,900 sessions and accessed the wireless internet (wi-fi) almost 8,300 times.

Many ask about the relevance of a library in this electronic age. Based on the circulation numbers, it is obvious that the demand for physical printed materials remains high. The Library is progressively meeting the demand for technology by providing public access to electronic materials, computers and wi-fi. In fact, overall patron "e-usage" averages about 175 instances every day as compared to about 90 items of physical circulation. Based on that comparison, one could say that the Willow Library is well on its way to becoming an e-library.

With almost no dedicated program-type space, the Library managed to host 70 different programs in 2015, with a total

attendance of over 1,500 patrons. These programs included a healthy mix of children's and adult programs. The programs ranged from weekly children's story hour, to summer reading programs, holiday and cultural programs, author lectures, and adult book club meetings. One notable program is "Read and Feed" where the Library partners with the Willow Food Pantry and the Alaska Food Bank to transport books and meals to children in the Caswell Lakes area. In 2015 Sunshine Transit joined the partnership and the children and parents from Caswell were transported to Willow for lunch and the Summer Reading Programming.

### C. WHAT OTHER PROGRAMS ARE SUPPORTED?

Both the Library and Community Center do a lot to help promote healthy and safe lifestyles for the community of Willow. The Library hosts:

- Monthly American Lung Association Better Breather's Club meetings;

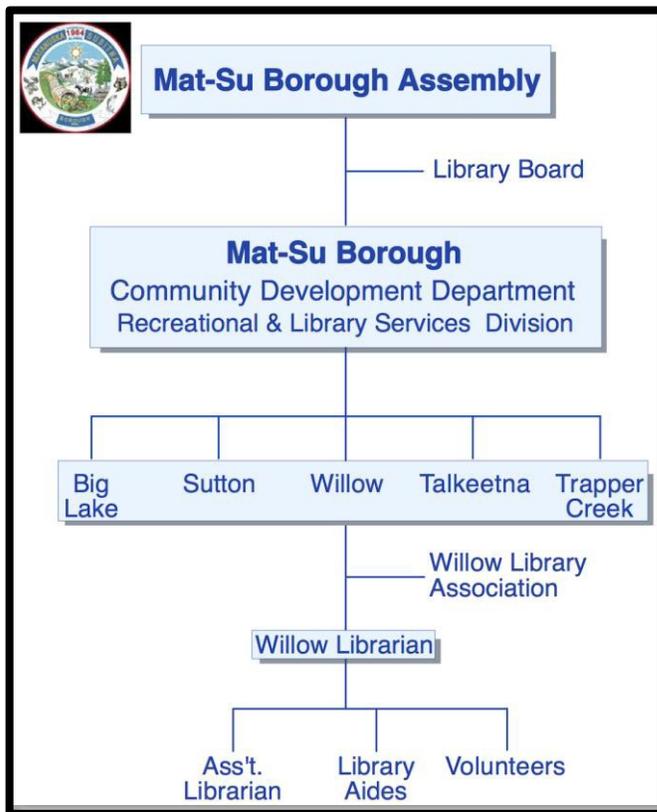
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- Blood Mobile visits several times per year, in collaboration with Lion's Club;
- Public Health Nurse visits for flu shots and annual school vaccination information; and
- Monthly Wildwood Mobile Vet clinic visits providing rabies vaccinations and many other services for animals.

In addition, the Library provides on-going distribution of safety information on the use of the local trail system and, of course, provides a robust collection of traditional and non-traditional medical, exercise, and general health materials.

The Community Center plays a vital role in the health and safety of Willow residents in promoting the programs and providing venues for:

- At least weekly yoga classes,
- Twice weekly Zumba classes,
- Martial Arts and Women's Self Defense classes,
- Willow Walkers (an indoor venue for walking),
- The annual Public Health Fair where as many as 125 participants can receive blood work and visit over 20 health exhibits and
- Red Cross CPR and First Aid Classes for the general public and the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).



Organizational chart, Borough Libraries.

The Library and Community Center have and will continue to, unreservedly support disaster response teams from the Red Cross, FEMA, the State Fire Marshall and the Borough. During the Sockeye fire in 2015, over 400 responders were housed in the facilities. The Willow CERT provides FEMA-based training here annually. The first Su Valley Emergency Preparation Fair is scheduled for May of 2016. Twenty-five exhibitions are planned.

D. GOVERNANCE AND VOLUNTEERS

The Willow Library is operated by the Borough. The legislative power of the Borough is vested in the Assembly. The Assembly approves the budget, sets the mill rate for taxation, and appropriates funds to provide for Borough services. The Borough Assembly reviews and



Two legged and four legged Library volunteers hand out books at Willow's annual Fourth of July Parade.

approves the Library budget annually. Through laws passed, the Borough Assembly establishes policy statements, which are then executed through the administration by the Borough Manager and his staff.

The Borough's Community Development Department, Recreational Services Division operates the public library system consisting of five libraries: Big Lake, Sutton, Talkeetna, Trapper Creek, and Willow. Together with the libraries of the cities of Palmer and Wasilla, these libraries form the Mat-Su Library Network (MSLN), a unique cooperative Library network within the State of Alaska.

MSLN libraries have joined the Joint Library Catalog, which allows requests for books from other libraries to be placed from the online catalog, or at each library. Items can be checked out or returned at any of these libraries.

The Borough also has established a Library Board, which acts in an advisory capacity to the manager and the assembly in the administration of the Borough's library powers. This includes reviewing the budgets of the libraries and making recommendations thereon, making recommendations regarding the long-range capital improvement program, as well as tendering any other recommendations or reviews regarding libraries. The Board consists of nine members, one from each of the MSLN libraries, as well as two at-large members. These members are recommended by the Librarian and community library advocates of their respective areas, and are then appointed by nomination of the Mayor and confirmation by the Assembly.

The Willow Library is currently staffed by one permanent, full-time Librarian and one permanent part-time Assistant Librarian, who works 35 hours per week. In addition, five Library Aides provide on-call coverage to maintain coverage and the level of required services. This calculates to 2.5 full-time equivalent employees. Willow's Librarian holds a BA in Organizational Management has almost completed a Master's degree in Library Science and has 18 years experience working in public libraries.

The two permanent Borough employees are represented by a union, while the on-call Library Aides are non-represented. Salaries are set by job classification, grade and step. Benefits for the permanent employees are provided through the State of Alaska Public Retirement System (PERS) and the Borough is self-insured for employee health benefits.

Library Hours: The Library is open to the public 45.5 hours per week with operating hours six days a week, 52 weeks a year. Willow Library's number of operating hours relative to the number of employees is the highest in the Borough and is very, very high compared to other libraries in the

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state. This high ratio of operating hours (45.5) to the number of full-time equivalent employees (2.5) shows that the Library is providing a very high level of public access.

Volunteers have an important role in Willow Library's operation and programming. Willow Library Association, made up of nine members, meets regularly to discuss and support Library needs. WLA members have partnered with Willow Elementary School as readers for various school activities and Spelling Bee judges. Several members facilitate a monthly adult book club and help with preschool story time as needed. Other volunteers shelve books and help with sorting and cleaning tasks. Several also help during summer reading programs. Various music programs, visiting authors, literary workshops, and other events are provided in Willow through the volunteer work of WLA, offering enrichment opportunities for area residents. Two members of WLA also serve on the Mat-Su Library Board. Volunteers recorded a total of 445.5 hours for 2015, and in 2016 a new Willow Library Friends group is providing volunteer help as well.

WLA has held a variety of fundraisers. They include: selling books and cookbooks, holding a 5K Race, raffling off donated artist prints, and selling plants. WLA also participates in the State's Pick. Click. Give. program, Amazon Smiles, and Fred Meyer Community Rewards.

## E. POPULATION SERVED



For the purpose of analyzing current usage and protecting future needs, the population served was estimated at 3,500 people.

There is no cut and dried, clear definition of the population served by the Willow Library. This is due, in part, to the fact that the Library is part of the larger Mat Su Library Network described in the previous section. Individual libraries in the network issue user cards; the cards can then be used at any of the seven network libraries. This is a highly accommodating service to Borough residents, but makes it challenging to determine a service population, so the number of active Willow Library card users, 1,792, can only be used as an indicator; other factors are also considered.

According to the State Library statistics, Willow Library's "legal service population" is 8,819. This number was assigned by

General area of the population served is over 900 square miles.

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the State Library System and is generally recognized as extraordinarily high since it appears to be distributed based on land size.

According to the 2010 Census, the Willow census area population is a little over 2,100. However, Library employees and volunteers know the Library has many users from the Caswell area, users that fly in from Skwentna, users from Talkeetna and Trapper Creek that stop in on their way to and from the Wasilla/Palmer area, and users from as far south as the Houston area.

Adding a portion of the populations of these areas gives a population served of approximately 3,000. Using the modest projected growth rate from the State of Alaska Department of Labor statistics yields a population of approximately 3,500 in 20 years time, 2035.



Help! These shelves are too high!

## PROJECT NEED

### A. OPERATIONAL DEFICIENCIES

The most obvious operational deficiencies are the Library's size and configuration. The Library is too small to hold its collections, forcing the use of stacks that are too high for many patrons to reach and stacks that are too close together making the width too narrow for wheelchair users and baby strollers. The circulation space around the stacks, tables, seating areas and computers is small and cramped. At present there is space for only one table. Patrons typically use the tables in the lobby area for overflow. There is only one seating area for adults and a tiny open space in the Children's area.

The configuration is such that the staff at the checkout counter does not have a line of sight into the southeast corner of the Library and are unable to monitor activities without leaving their workstation.



Reference collection located in the only program space.

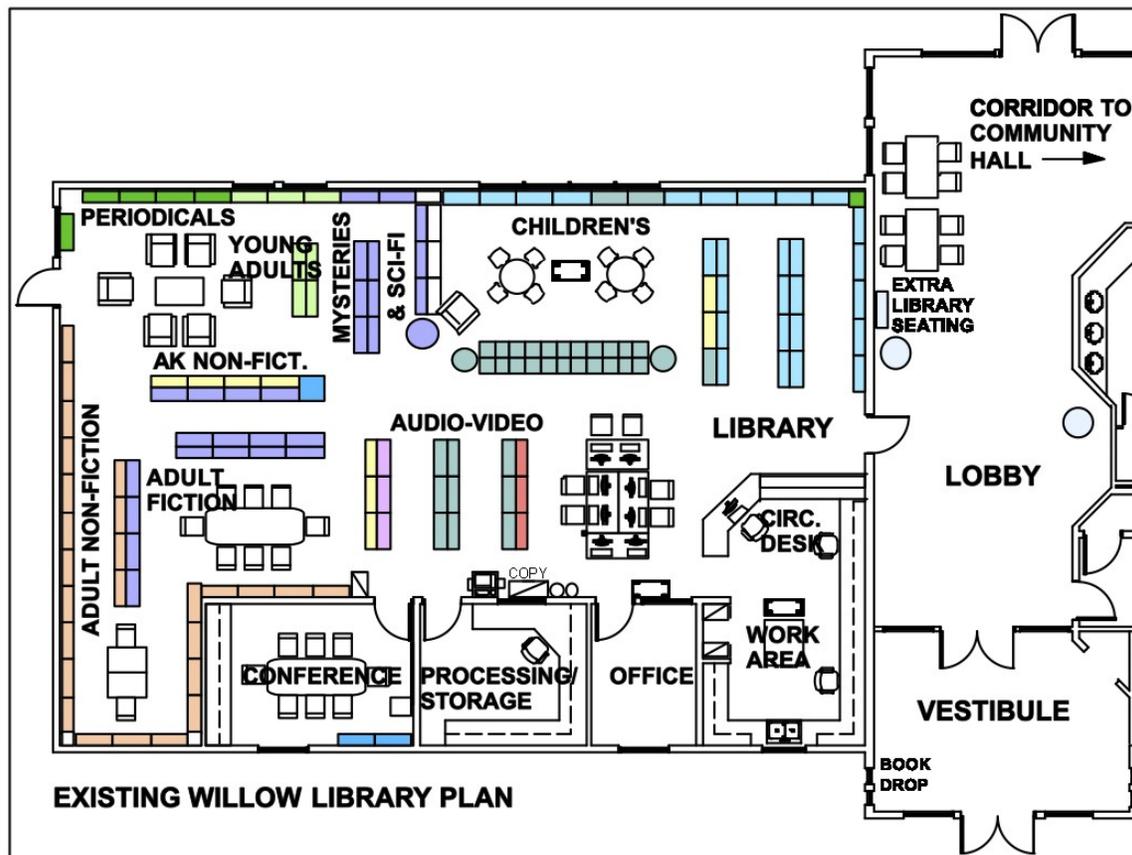
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To use the toilet facilities, staff must leave the Library and cross the hall to access the shared Community Center public toilets. This can occasionally leave the front desk unattended.

Current best practices for libraries include:

- Variety of program spaces
- Defined teen area (for young adults no longer attracted to the Children's collections and not yet ready for the Adult collections)
- Business Center to provide access to copiers, faxes, printers.

The Willow Library has none of these spaces. The program space is limited to one small meeting room that can comfortably seat 8 at the most. This is woefully inadequate to host a visiting class of students or a group of adults who may wish to access the OWL equipment. (OWL is Online With Libraries – audio video equipment with high bandwidth speed for videoconferencing anywhere). The other program space available to the Library is the Community Center's theater hall that seats 300. This space is inappropriately large for most of the Library's programs.



Existing Willow Library floor plan showing shared Vestibule, Lobby and Toilet Rooms.

For promoting general literacy, current best practice is to provide a well-defined and attractive Teen area. The Teen area for young adults addresses the interests of those no longer attracted to the Children's collections and not yet ready for the Adult collections. It is intended to keep readers engaged at all age levels. There is no space to adequately provide such a service.

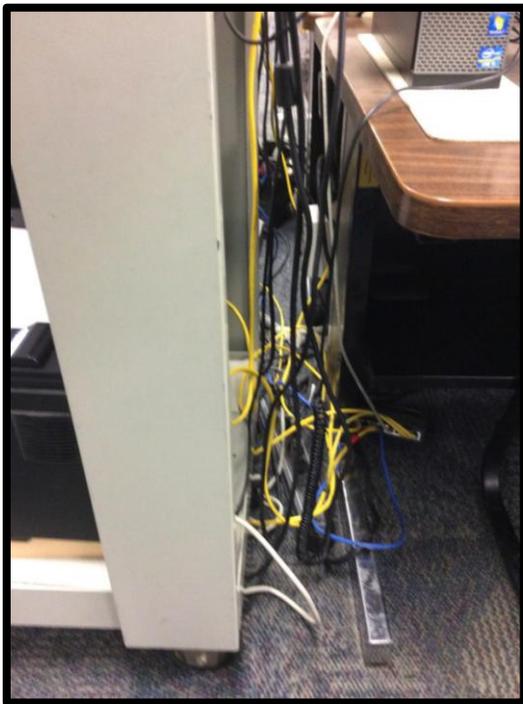
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Most new libraries in Alaska include a business center that provides a small workspace for copying, faxing, and printing. This is an adjunct to the provision of public use computers. Many, many patrons do not have computers at home or even access to high bandwidth internet. The Library provides these services free of charge. Research statistics have shown that between 40-50% of public computer use is related to employment searches. The ability to write and print a resume from that public access computer is a tremendous service to the community. (The nearest commercial printing service is 30 miles away in Wasilla.)



Volunteers meeting in the small conference room, planning the next Library event.

## B. FACILITY DEFICIENCIES



Rat's nest of extension cords and internet cables.

As mentioned previously, the original Community Center was constructed in 1983 with the Library addition occurring in 1991. To understand the general condition of the facility a Condition Survey was performed. See Attachment A, Existing Conditions Survey of the Willow Community Center. This survey was conducted in March of 2015 by Wolf Architecture, Uni Group Engineering (mechanical engineers) and Northern Electrical Engineering.

The facility was built to commercial standards and found to be generally well maintained and in good condition. However, the facility has been in service for over 30 years and many finish materials are at the end of their useful life, such as the ceramic tile in the bathrooms.

The main parking area is blacktop and poorly lit. The sloped roof at the entrance canopy dumps snow too near the entrance creating puddles and icy spots, as well as flooding into the

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entry hallway. There is not sufficient grading to drain water away from the building. There are no identified handicap accessible parking spaces or a defined route to the main entrance.

Vinyl siding was applied over the original cedar siding at some point. The vinyl siding is not holding up as well as one would hope. It is also recommended that the standing seam metal roof and flashing be replaced fairly soon. The ceilings and light fixtures throughout the facility appear to be of original install and are in fair condition but showing age.

Several of the exterior doors, for both the Library and the Community Center do not meet current accessibility standards in terms of width and threshold heights. The Library's aisle widths, study tables and computer tables do not meet accessibility standards either.

The baseboard heat system appears to be poorly zoned – one zone serves the entire Library. Sometimes in the summer the facility becomes uncomfortably hot. The staff and patrons become even more frustrated that many windows are inoperable.

One of the obvious problems is lack of power supply in the locations where needed. The facility was designed before the advent of personal computers and personal cell phones. Many, many, extension cords are distributed throughout the Library to power the computers and other equipment.

## **THE EXPANDED AND UPGRADED FACILITY**

### **A. SPACE REQUIREMENTS**

An estimate of the amount of space required for the expanded Library was developed based on:

- Population served
- National standards for collection size
- Amount of seating needed
- Anticipated size needs for a multi-purpose room
- Number of computers needed
- Current best practices

These aspects were deliberated and discussed in the Pre-D meetings with the feasibility committee, staff and public. The below table summarizes space requirements for Willow's Library.

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##	Component	Existing SF	Future SF	Calculations and Notes on future Space	
<b>Reading Room:</b>					
1	Adult Reading Area	Adult Collections Area	814	1,465	Standard, more efficient & lower height shelving, wider,
		Adult Seating, Tables	580	740	Table seating 8 @ 25 SF/person, 6 lounge seats
		Adult Computers, OPAC's	145	240	7 @ 30 SF ea
2	Young Adult Reading Area	Young Adult (Teen) Collections Area	61	130	Shelving & display
		Young Adult Seating	-	215	2 @ table (80), 2 lounge seat @30 SF/seat, 3 @ cyberbar
		Young Adult Computer Area	-	140	Includes small gaming area
3	Children's Area	Children's Collections Area	405	580	
		Children's Seating/ Story Area	220	150	6 table seats, 5 @ 10 SF ea. for story hour, rocking chair
		Children's Computer	-	20	2 seats
<b>Sub-total Reading Room</b>		<b>2,225</b>	<b>3,680</b>		
<b>Ancillary Spaces</b>					
4	Program Areas	Business/Copy Center	28	55	Computer, printer, copier, work surface, bulletin board
		Multi-Purpose/Conference Room	170	630	Conference room (30 seats + kitchenette)
		Study/Tutoring Room	-	185	
		Multi-Purpose Room Storage	-	105	
		<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>975</b>	
5	Staff Support Areas	Circulation/Checkout Desk	125	180	
		Office & Staff Work	260	240	
		Storage Room	155	105	
		<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>525</b>	
6	Building Support Spaces	Arctic Entry	-	-	Shared Arctic Entry
		Lobby, Display	-	-	Shared Lobby
		Public Restrooms	-	170	New restrooms in Library
		Mechanical, Electrical, Comms	-	250	Borough to provide guidance on the size of this space
		Janitorial	-	20	Currently shared space
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>440</b>		
<b>Sub-total Program &amp; Support Areas</b>		<b>2,963</b>	<b>1,940</b>		
7	Circulation In existing Library	87			
8	Future Circulation		1,015		
9	<b>Total Square Footage</b>	<b>3,050</b>	<b>6,635</b>		

### Space requirements of the Library replacement.

The population served has been previously discussed. Collection size was evaluated based on Andrew Dahlgren's work with the State of Wisconsin Library systems. This collection size evaluation has been used on all the new libraries in the State of Alaska within the last five years and has been found to be a very useful tool to evaluate collection sizes.

The collections in the Willow Library have generally kept pace with current standards for providing relevant and appropriately sized collections for the population served. A careful analysis shows that some minor weeding is probably needed in the areas of Adult Non-Fiction, reference materials and in Children's collections or about 15% of the total collection. The reason weeding is recommended is that it's not sustainable or good practice to build square footage for materials that do not circulate or are not used. See Attachment E: Willow Library Collections Analysis for specific shelving requirements.

The above space requirements of 6,635 square feet provides more seating and tables, a separate Teen Area and separate Children's Area, a small Business Center, and two meeting rooms. One meeting room is for small groups and can seat six at a table. The Multi-Purpose Conference Room can seat up to 30, includes a kitchenette/hospitality counter and has immediately adjacent storage for tables and chairs. The Library's Multi-Purpose Room is deliberately sized to fill the gap between the existing small meeting room that can comfortably seat eight and the large theater hall in the Community Center that can accommodate up to 300.

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## B. EXPANSION VS. STAND-ALONE FACILITY

As explained previously, the existing 3,050 SF Library is connected to the Community Center and shares many common spaces. With the identified need of approximately 6,635 square feet, discussion arose regarding the options of further expansion in the same location versus constructing a new, stand-alone facility.

Many aspects of each option were analyzed and discussed. These included the following topics:

- Cost of operating an expansion in place versus a stand-alone facility. (The differences were relatively minor.)
- Construction cost of expansion in place versus a newly constructed stand-alone facility (Again, the difference was negligible.)
- Impact on Community Center if Library moved to a new stand-alone facility.
- Impact on Library if remaining in same location.

In addition to feasibility committee meetings, a public meeting was held to gather public input on this decision. The public meeting was well attended by about 50 Willow residents. There was clearly support for both concepts, however the expansion in place concept seemed to be the most desirable to the public. With concurrence from the Library Association, the Pre-D process moved forward with the concept of expanding in place.

With the decision to expand the Library in place and immediately adjacent to the Community Center, Wolf Architecture further analyzed the existing Library building. The existing structure allows a maximum of only 9' ceiling height, and less than that under the light fixtures. The low ceiling height would also not allow ventilation ducting to new spaces. And the low ceiling height is not appropriate for larger library spaces. The decision was made to demolish the existing Library structure and construct new space with the appropriate ceiling shape and height.

Of some concern to the Willow residents, Library supporters and elected officials is the need to re- fresh the finishes and upgrade some of the systems of the Community Center to better match the new Library space. So this Pre-D process was expanded to include the deferred maintenance and upgrades to the Community Center.

## C. CONCEPT DESIGN OF LIBRARY REPLACEMENT

Wolf Architecture of Palmer, Alaska continued their work on this project and prepared a concept design. This design was developed and refined through a series of meetings with the feasibility committee. The following page shows the floor plan for 6,635 square feet of new space. For the full concept design see Attachment D: Concept Design by Wolf Architecture.

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### 1. Exterior Form:

The existing Community Center is monolithic in form, and reminiscent of many buildings constructed in the 1970s. A low-gabled roof structure was added a few years after the original building was constructed which has since served as the Willow Library.

The existing roof forms are large imposing elements shedding toward the entry and parking area creating a hazard in the winter with seasonal drainage problems prevalent around the building. The low-slung gabled form of the existing Library was a low-budget solution not specifically designed as dedicated Library space and is not conducive for expansion or retrofit as dedicated Library function.

The goals of the proposed Library addition were to:

- a) Create a functional and welcoming Library facility,
- b) Enhance the existing facility and
- c) Provide a visitor-friendly main entrance into the Community Center.

### 2. Site Design:

The proposed site design solution addresses some key site issues. The key site related components impacted by the design focus on:

- a) Addressing existing site-related challenges
  - i. Utility-related upgrades and revisions
  - ii. Existing site drainage issues
- b) Increasing accessibility for elderly and disabled users to this facility
- c) Enhancing the use of the west (lake side) of the facility

The proposed site work provides for new drywells to safely and efficiently distribute building and surface runoff thereby minimizing or eliminating current drainage issues at and around the front entrance to the building. Utility work involves providing a new well for the entire facility and a new septic system for the proposed Library replacement.

New sidewalks on the east, (main entry side) of the building will provide defined pedestrian routes from the parking areas to the main entrance with identified areas for disabled parking. The new sidewalks will also define planting beds around the facility which will also provide shedding and drainage areas immediately around the building segregated from pedestrian walking surfaces. A new convenient drive up book drop is planned for the south end of the facility.

Work planned for the west side of the facility includes a new, covered, paved, seating area, a planting area, lawn and landscaping to include trees.

### 3. Building Form:

The proposed new building form presents visitors with a welcoming, signed entrance. The Community identifies with heavy timber and wood elements, which is reflected in the design

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## Project Development Plan

response. Heavy timber beams are introduced at the roof soffit at both the Library and the new entry canopies at the Main Entrance and at the book drop.

The proposed design solution maintains the use of the shed form to create a solid and stately abutment to the existing building. The new form is not only inviting, but also increases the opportunity for natural lighting within the new space and successfully addresses the problems associated with the existing main entry by containing and diverting the drainage from the existing roof. The low form at the south end of the building houses utilitarian elements such as toilet room, and mechanical equipment.

The new floor plan configuration is designed to maintain a similar function to that of the existing facility. The main entrance will provide access to the new Library as well as to the existing Community Center; either can be closed off when not needed. See floor plan on the following page.

The primary entrance into the Library is located directly off the central commons space of the Community Center. Visitors entering the Library will be immediately greeted by the Library staff at the circulation desk and have a commanding view of the entire Library and the vista to the lake. The Library is fitted with toilet facilities and will be able to function as a stand-alone facility, but patrons will also continue to have access to the common toilets within the Community Center if desired.

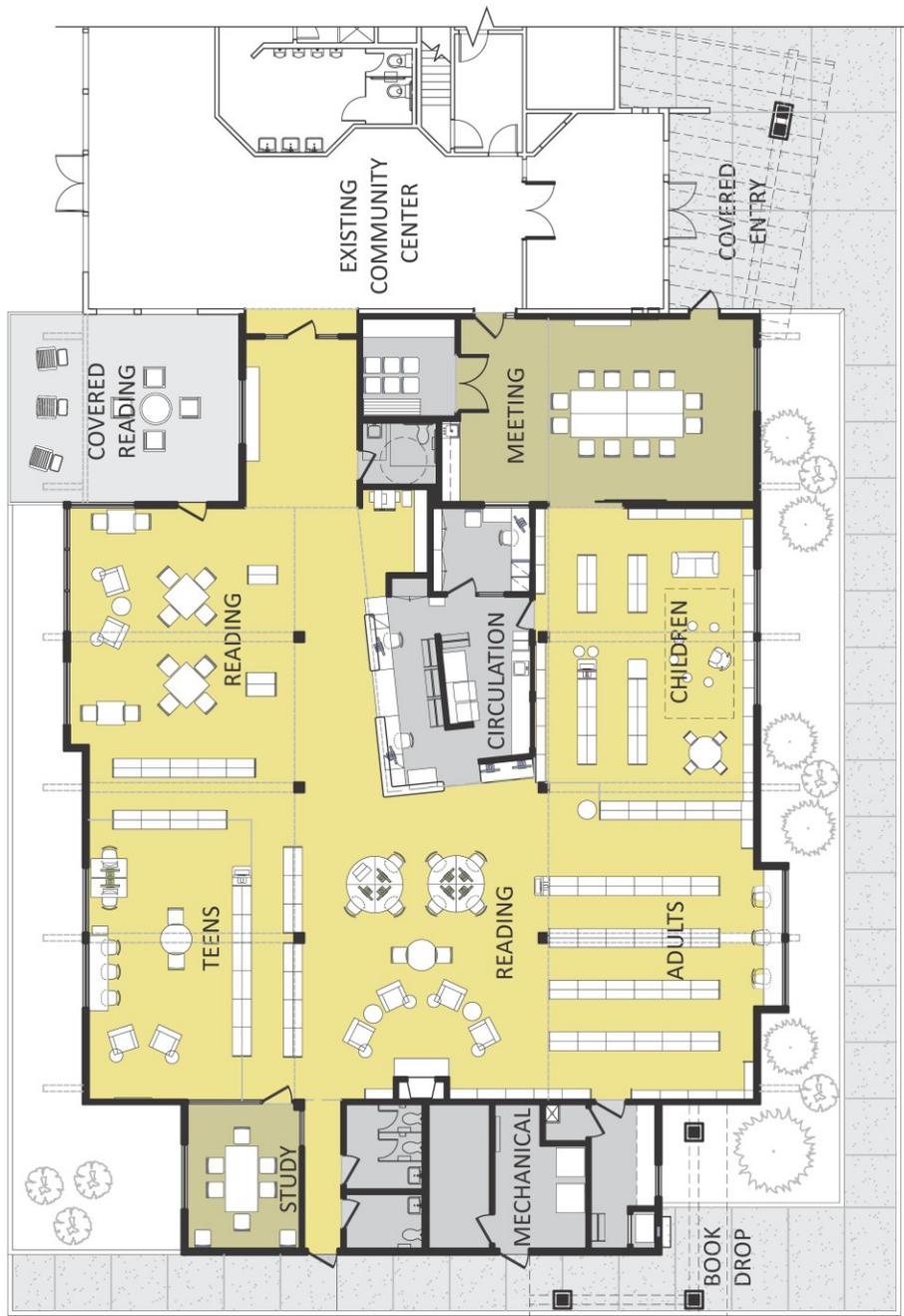
The Library is organized around a central spine concept. A central mechanical utilidor creates a center spine under which the circulation desk, workroom areas and public computer areas are housed. The space also provides a comfortable, protected area for the new reading area in front of the centrally located fireplace.

The Adult, Young Adult, and Children's book stacks and reading areas are separated and located on either side of the central spine. A Children's Area is located immediately adjacent to the new Multi-Purpose Room to help facilitate children's program use of that space.

Adult and Young Adult reading and stack areas are separated from the Children's areas and each has views to the lake and park. The Young Adult Area is equipped with a gaming area as well as a small Study Room. The Adult reading area is located near the public computer terminals and has direct access to an outdoor protected reading area. These areas offer comfortable space with a light and airy feel.

#### 4. Interior Finishes

The interior finishes are to be primarily painted sheetrock with wood trim accents similar to the wood detailing expressed on the exterior. Interior wood detailing is envisioned to be linear wood slat baffles on the upper level sloped ceilings above the stack and reading areas. The linear wood will be backed with acoustical insulation to help provide sound control. The ceiling at central spine will be a combination of painted sheetrock soffit and accessible acoustical ceiling tile.



the foraker group  
Standing Beside Alaska's Nonprofits

WILLOW LIBRARY REPLACEMENT AND  
COMMUNITY CENTER UPGRADES

Concept floor plan developed for the Library replacement.

Flooring within the Library is envisioned as being commercial grade carpet tile throughout. Wet areas such as the kitchenette will receive vinyl flooring and depending on budget, the bathrooms are envisioned to be finished with ceramic tile.

An intermediate level wood trellis will provide a comfortable scale within the tall volumes and help provide light control.

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**Project Development Plan****5. Circulation Desk**

The circulation desk is centrally located and has commanding views of the entire Library. Amenities include a workroom, a Librarian's office, access to a unisex family toilet room, and in close proximity is the business center, which will house a copier and work area.

The staff work area houses cabinets for supplies and is equipped with a work sink to minimize the need for staff to leave the area.

Due to the configuration of the site, the book drop is remotely located at the south end of the building. The book drop area has both work space and room for storage.

**D. COMMUNITY CENTER UPGRADES**

The facility upgrades are mostly considered deferred major maintenance type work. The facility age and existing roof forms were discussed in the previous section. The goals of the upgrades to the Community Center portion of the facility include:

- Integrate the new Library replacement space on to the existing facility. The Community Center siding and trim will be replaced to match or complement the Library design.
- Correct code deficiencies.
- Install a new fully automatic sprinkler system throughout the facility.
- Address glaciation issue associated with the north and east roofs.
- Replace interior finishes nearing the end of their useful life.

**1. Exterior Site Work**

Remove existing 1,000 gallon fuel oil tank and replace with new above-ground 1500-gallon fuel tank. Improve parking lot paving. Provide parking lot lighting. Provide landscaping.

**2. Roof Upgrades**

The original design for this structure did not provide adequate roof ventilation to prevent ice buildup on the roof. The north roof assembly is particularly problematic in this regard which has resulted in glaciation and damage to the roof and siding. The recommendations for the remedial work required to address this issue are as follows:

- a) Install new mechanical ventilation at the upper portion of the gabled roof assembly.
- b) Install new insulated wall around flue vents penetrating truss space.
- c) Increase size and quantity of ventilation holes at the bottom of truss.

**3. Interior Renovations**

Renovation work within the existing Community Center includes the following:

- a) Replace existing suspended acoustical ceiling in the existing theater hall.
- b) Resurface existing VCT flooring in multi-purpose room with new luxury vinyl tile.
- c) Construct new stair to existing platform.
- d) Patch and paint existing GWB.
- e) Remove and replace existing carpet in entry vestibule with walk-off carpet tiles.

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**Project Development Plan**

- f) Extend new automatic sprinkler system throughout existing facility and attic spaces.
- g) Add 2 new multi use toilet rooms near existing toilet rooms
  - i. 2) toilets
  - ii. 2) lavatories
- h) Replace all existing light fixtures with new LED light fixtures.

## **PROJECT AND OPERATING COSTS**

### **A. PROJECT COSTS**

The estimated total Project Cost for both the Library Replacement and the upgrades to the Community Center is \$5,660,000. This does not include the value of the Borough-owned land, the existing infrastructure improvements or the value of the technical assistance provided during the Pre-Development efforts. The basis of the cost estimate is the concept design prepared by Wolf Architecture. The Library Replacement and the Community Center Upgrades were analyzed separately, although the efforts are viewed as one project.

It is important to note that this is an estimate prepared by the Foraker Group Pre-Development Program. It is not a budget. It does not become a budget until the Borough adopts, or adjusts and adopts these numbers for their project.

The table directly below summarizes the costs for the Library replacement (\$4,300,000); the narrative corresponds to the line items listed in the table. The table following summarizes the costs (\$1,360,000) for the Community Center upgrades. The explanations and narrative are nearly identical.

## Project Development Plan

Line #	Description	% of Const Cost	Estimate
1	Soft Costs		
2	Borough Indirect and Project Management Support, 5% of grants and donations		\$ 225,000
3	Survey, soils and geotechnical report		\$ 25,000
4	Design, includes landscaping, energy modeling, renderings, interior design, furniture specifications, bidding assistance, assistance with public art program	8%	\$ 237,624
5	Construction Admin, by A/E, special inspections	3%	\$ 89,109
6	Other Direct Costs: advertising, printing, (approx \$2,000) moving costs X 2, (\$5,500 X 2) temp quarters (\$30,000 lump sum), communications (\$19,000)		\$ 62,000
7	Hard Costs, Construction Costs		
8	Construction: 6,635 square feet, including shelving, See HMS estimate dated Jan 19, 2016, \$426/sf		\$ 2,828,863
9	Design Contingency: elements not accounted for in concept design estimate including: possible tie to ground source heat system, include landscaping, possible expanded mechanical room	5%	\$ 141,443
10	Total, Construction Costs		\$ 2,970,306
11	Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment: circulation desk, office furniture, tables and chairs, IT, AV, telephones, \$32/sf		\$ 212,320
12	1% for Art	1%	\$ 29,703
13	Contingency, for use with any element	10%	\$ 297,031
14	Sub-Total, Estimated Project Cost		\$ 4,148,094
15	Cost Escalation to Summer of 2018, 4%		\$ 145,000
16	Total, Estimated Project Cost		\$ 4,293,094
17	<b>Rounded, Use:</b>		<b>\$ 4,300,000</b>

### Estimated project cost for the new Library Replacement.

Line 1. Soft Costs: This is a broad category of costs that typically covers administrative fees, consultant's costs and other indirect costs that are not actual construction.

Line 2. Borough Indirect Fee: This is an ordinance mandated, flat fee applied to grants and donations designed to cover the administrative costs of managing the project. This includes such things as grant reporting, financial management, legal and procurement efforts, and project management.

Line 3. Survey and Soils Report: It is recommended that several soils samples be taken in the area of the replacement footprint. The report should give geotechnical recommendations for footings and foundations. Some survey work may also be required. The estimate for these services is based on Foraker Pre-D experience.

Line 4. Design: The Mat-Su Borough limits design costs to 8% of the construction costs. The scope of the work and services will need to be tailored to meet this requirement. A 10% design fee would be supported for the level of services typically required for a Library.

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Project Development Plan

Line 5. Construction Admin: Building codes require special inspectors, paid for by the Borough, for special types of structures. In addition, regular inspections and submittal reviews will be required. The amount budgeted for these services are based on Foraker Pre-D experience.

Line 6. Other Direct Costs: This category covers a plethora of Owner costs associated with bringing a Capital project on line. It includes such things as proposal and bid advertising, printing costs, costs to move the Library out of the current location and later, move back in, and the cost of temporarily re-locating and operating elsewhere during construction.

Line 7. Hard Costs, Construction Costs: This category of costs includes the actual construction and furniture, fixtures and equipment.

Line 8. Construction Costs: HMS Cost Estimators prepared a cost estimate based on the 6,635 square feet concept design. The HMS estimate is dated January 19, 2016, and is included as Attachment C: HMS Construction Cost Estimate.

Line 9. Design Contingency: After preparation of the concept design and the construction cost estimate, other needed elements were identified. These include: a possible tie to the Community Center's new ground source heat pump system, additional landscaping, additional parking lot lighting and possibly an expansion to the mechanical room. This estimate accounts for the additional scope items.

Line 10. Total Construction Costs: This is the sum of the originally estimated costs in Line 8, plus the items added in Line 9.

Line 11. Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment: This budget line provides for all new furniture and equipment in the Library. The value of \$32/sf is based on Foraker Pre-D experience with other libraries this size.

Line 12. 1% for Art: There is no requirement for a 1% for Art program for this project. However, there is an expectation from the public that art will be included in a Library project.

Line 13. Contingency: A 10% contingency (of the total construction costs) is recommended for this project. The contingency is intended for use for any element of the project.

Line 14. Sub-total, Estimated Project Cost: Self-explanatory.

Line 15. Escalation: The very earliest this project could begin construction is probably the summer of 2018. All costs will increase somewhat by then. For this project, we use a 4% escalation factor.

Line 16. Total Estimated Project Cost: Self-explanatory.

Line 17. Rounded: Use \$4.3 million. It can be misleading to use a project cost estimate that is significant to the last digit. It implies a degree of accuracy that simply does not exist at this level of

## Project Development Plan

design. It is recommended that instead of \$4,293,094, that the figure be rounded up to \$4,300,000.

Line #	Description	% of Const Cost	Estimate
1	Soft Costs		
2	Borough Indirect and Project Management Support, 5% of grants and donations		\$ 72,000
3	Survey, soils and geotechnical report, not required		\$ -
4	Design, includes landscaping, energy modeling, interior design, bidding assistance, assistance with public art program	8%	\$ 76,358
5	Construction Admin, by A/E, special inspections	3%	\$ 28,634
6	Other Direct Costs: advertising, printing, communications, lump sum for all		\$ 27,500
7	Hard Costs, Construction Costs		
8	Construction: See HMS estimate dated Jan 19, 2016, upgrades include sprinkler system		\$ 909,026
9	Design Contingency: elements not accounted for in concept design estimate including: possible upgrade to septic system, office displacement/relocation	5%	\$ 45,451
10	Total, Construction Costs		\$ 954,477
11	Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment: lump sum		\$ 50,000
12	1% for Art	1%	\$ 9,545
13	Contingency, for use with any element	10%	\$ 95,448
14	Sub-Total, Estimated Project Cost		\$ 1,313,962
15	Cost Escalation to Summer of 2018, 4%		\$ 46,600
16	Total, Estimated Project Cost		\$ 1,360,562
17	<b>Rounded, Use:</b>		<b>\$ 1,360,000</b>

**Estimated project costs for the Community Center upgrades.**

The total Project Costs are estimated as follows:

Library Replacement	\$4,300,000
Community Center upgrades	<u>\$1,360,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,660,000</b>

**B. OPERATING COSTS**

The annual operating costs for the Willow Library are paid for by the Mat Su Borough. The costs for 2014, 2015, and 2016 are \$284,000, \$325,000 and \$339,000 per annum respectively. The estimated operating cost increase to operate the new replacement Library is \$18,055 per year.

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Project Development Plan

The table below analyzes differences in operating costs based upon this project's concept design for a replacement library. Several of these costs will need to be negotiated with WACO and memorialized in an amended operating agreement. The cost categories are the same as listed in the Borough's budget.

## Project Development Plan

Line #	Category	Detail	2016	Changes due to New Facility
1	EX11-Salaries & Wages			
2	EX12-Benefits			
3	EX13-Expenses Within Borough			
4	EX14-Expenses Outside Of Borough			
5	EX21-Communications			
6	EX22-Advertising			
7	EX23-Printing			
8	EX24-Utilities-Building Oprtns			
9		Electricity, <i>about doubled, based on Sutton Library</i>	3,800	7,600
10		Garbage Pickups, <i>slight increase due to increased use</i>	2,000	2,200
11		Heating Fuel Oil, <i>probably around \$14k for library + \$2k for shared spaces</i>	16,000	16,000
12	EX25-Rental/Lease			
13	EX26-Professional Charges			
14	EX27-Insurance & Bond			
15		Property Insurance, <i>based on Sutton Library</i>		7,500
16		Liability Insurance, <i>based on Sutton Library</i>		300
17	EX28-Maintenance Services			
18	EX29-Other Contractual			
19		Training Reimb/Conf Fees		
20		Labor Services, <i>current cost for WACO to provide janitorial services, increase due to increase in size</i>	12,000	18,000
21		Testing		
22		Other Contractual		
23	EX30-Office Supplies			
24	EX31-Maintenance Supplies			
25		Building Maint Supplies, <i>reduction due to new facility</i>	500	200
26		<i>equipment</i>	195	750
27		Grounds Maint Supplies	500	500
28		Other Maint. Supplies	2,000	2,000
29	EX33-Misc Supplies			
30	EX34-Equipment Under \$5,000			
31	EX51-Equipment Over \$5,000			
32			\$ 36,995	\$ 55,050
33		<b>Estimated Increase in Operating Cost</b>		<b>\$ 18,055</b>

Estimated increase in operating costs for the Library replacement.

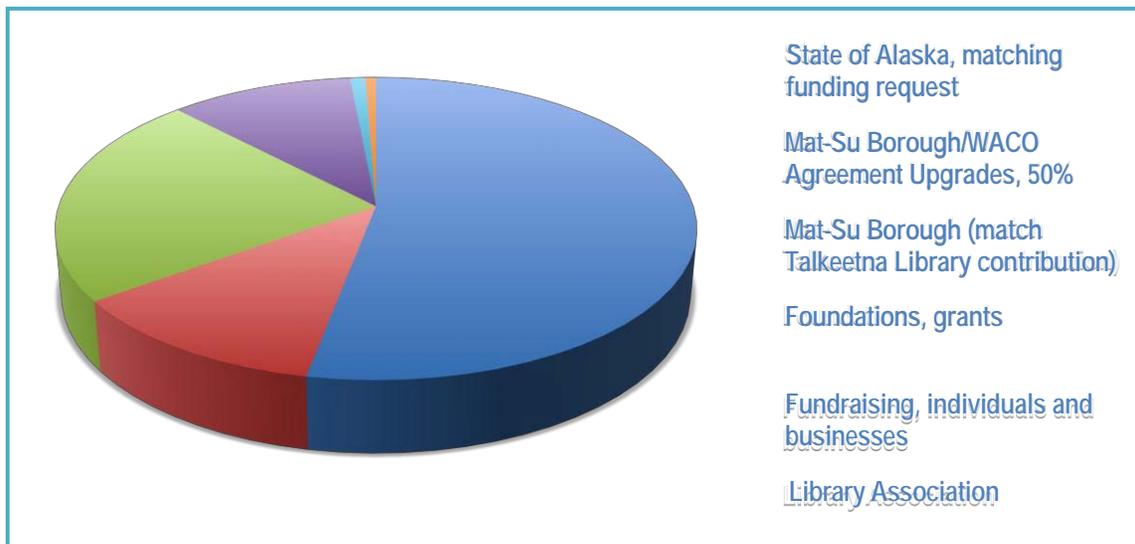
## Project Development Plan

Most of the cost increase is attributable to increase of electricity usage, additional property insurance, and increased cost for janitorial services. See Lines 9, 15 and 20 above. Similar to the additional funding required for the new Sutton and Talkeetna Libraries, the Mat-Su Borough would be responsible for the increased operating costs.

## C. FUNDING PLAN

The total estimated amount of funds required for the Library Replacement and the Community Center Upgrades is \$5,660,000. A request for matching grant funding from the State of Alaska was submitted to the Legislature during the spring 2016 session. The request is in the amount of \$3,000,000. Additional funding is required. The following table and pie chart demonstrate potential sources for funding. The narrative following uses the same numbering as the table.

Funding Source Summary	Estimated Amount
1. State of Alaska, matching funding request	\$3,000,000
2. Mat Su Borough/WACO Agreement Upgrades, 50%	\$ 680,000
3. Mat Su Borough (match Talkeetna Library contribution)	\$1,290,000
4. Foundations, grants	\$ 605,000
5. Fundraising, individual and businesses	\$ 50,000
6. Willow Library Association	\$ 35,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,660,000</b>



1. **State of Alaska, matching funding request** : The Library Association has requested the State of Alaska to provide matching grant funding for the project. The amount requested, \$3,000,000 is 50% of the project cost and the value of the land and pre-development costs. This State matching grant program has successfully funded the Sutton and Talkeetna libraries.

Project Development Plan

2. **Mat Su Borough/WACO Agreement Upgrades, 50%**The operating agreement between the Borough and WACO stipulates that the Borough is responsible for the major maintenance costs of the Community Center. The amount shown is 50% of the estimated cost since the State grant would cover the other 50%.

3. **Mat Su Borough (match Talkeetna Library contribution)**The suggested funding level from the Borough for the replacement Library is equal to the funding level provided for the Talkeetna Library.

4. **Foundations, grants:** Similar to how the new Sutton and Talkeetna libraries were funded, this funding plan assumes that the Borough will pursue grant funding from foundations. There is excellent precedence and experience in obtaining these grants.

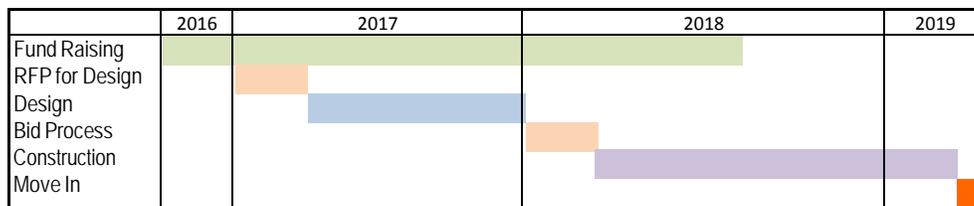
5. **Fundraising, individual and businesses:** The Willow Library Association (WLA) has committed to undertaking a capital fundraising campaign. (They applied for the State matching grant funding through CAPSIS.) The suggested amount of \$50,000 represents new contributions from individuals, organizations and businesses.

6. **Willow Library Association:** The WLA has steadily been fundraising for many years for a new Library project. They currently have approximately \$35,000 to commit to the project.

D. SCHEDULE

The progress of the project will hinge on the available funding. While this year may be a difficult year for State of Alaska matching grants, should the Borough decide to forward fund the design, the project could begin as early as the fall of 2016.

The Borough process for selecting and contracting with a design team, (RFP for Design), the design of the facility, the construction bidding process, the construction process itself, furnishing the facility, and moving back in will be approximately 2 years and 3 or 4 months. The bar chart indicates how fundraising can be occurring while design is under way. See the bar chart below.



Estimated schedule for design and construction.

## NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Aided by the Mat Su Borough, the citizens, community and Willow Library Association must continue to “tell their story” and advocate for the Library Replacement and Community Center upgrades. Information about the need for the project needs to continue to be distributed to their elected leaders and budget decision makers. Much work remains to be done with both the State and the Borough.

When funding of the project becomes secured, MSB and Library staff will need to develop and execute a plan for temporarily housing the Library. The Library feasibility committee was clear that there should only be minor interruptions of service while the expansion was under construction. Closing the Library for a year or so during construction was not acceptable. The establishment of a temporary library during a construction process has occurred many times in many other locations. We encourage the MSB to reach out to others for “lessons learned” during this planning.

Activities for planning and executing the provision of temporary housing include:

- Research “lessons learned” from other temporary libraries
- Closely coordinate with contractor schedule
- Locate and secure temporary space
- Identify critical infrastructure requirements and provide (circulation desk control, internet connectivity, etc)
- Execute a move: boxing books, re-locating shelves, unboxing books
- Then execute a move back to the new, replacement Library.

A rough estimate of \$35,500 has been included in the Direct Costs of the Project Cost Estimate for the temporary re-location moving costs. However, this figure will require refinement based on the actual plan and space available.

There appears to be a blurring of the responsibilities for daily operations of the Community Center. The area of concern is that Library staff are frequently called upon to open and close facilities, respond to the public about the use of the facility and provide general user assistance because WACO staff are not available. Time spent by the Library staff providing this assistance takes them away from their Library duties. The current operating agreement between WACO and the Borough did not foresee or memorialize these tasks undertaken by Library staff. We recommend that this issue be re-visited between the Borough and WACO and be memorialized in the Operating Agreement.

## ATTACHMENTS

Available online at <http://bit.ly/WillowPDP>

Attachment A: Existing Conditions Survey, March 30, 2015

Attachment B: Mat-Su Borough/WACO Agreement

Attachment C: HMS Construction Cost Estimate

Attachment D: Concept Design by Wolf Architecture

Attachment E: Willow Library Collections Analysis