

**NORWICH BRANCH PUBLIC LIBRARY  
DRAFT FEASIBILITY STUDY**

---

**F. J. GALLOWAY ASSOCIATES INC.**

*Management and Planning Consultants*

April 2002

C:\WINDOWS\Desktop\this\Fesblty-v2.doc

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

NORWICH BRANCH PUBLIC LIBRARY  
FEASIBILITY STUDY

<b>1.0</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1-1</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>OPERATING ENVIRONMENT.....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
2.1	The Township of Norwich.....	2-1
2.2	The Oxford County Library System.....	2-1
2.3	Branch Operating Profiles.....	2-4
2.4	The Library Facility.....	2-6
2.5	Service Area Population and Future Development.....	2-8
<b>3.0</b>	<b>COMMUNITY INPUT.....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
3.1	Introduction.....	3-1
3.2	Survey Results.....	3-1
3.3	Focus Groups.....	3-5
.1	Seniors.....	3-5
.2	Young Adults.....	3-7
.3	Adults.....	3-9
.4	Community Representatives.....	3-11
.5	Library and NLERC Staff.....	3-13
3.4	Interview Results.....	3-15
<b>4.0</b>	<b>OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.....</b>	<b>4-1</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>FACILITY DEVELOPMENT PROFILE.....</b>	<b>5-1</b>
5.1	Space Allocation.....	5-1
5.2	Capital Costs and Funding.....	5-2
5.3	Operating Cost Impacts.....	5-5
<b>6.0</b>	<b>LOCATION.....</b>	<b>6-1</b>
6.1	Overview.....	6-1
6.2	55 Main Street West.....	6-3
6.3	Tidey Street.....	6-3
6.4	Existing Building on Stover Street.....	6-3
6.5	Summary.....	6-4
<b>7.0</b>	<b>RECOMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>7-1</b>

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The former Village of Norwich has enjoyed public library services since 1851, over 150 years. The branch library in Norwich was integrated into the Oxford County Library system in 1965.

The current library facility is a Carnegie Library Building constructed in 1914. The building is approximately eighty-seven years old and significant challenges have been identified with the facility. These challenges include accessibility for seniors, those with disabilities, young mothers with children, and others; a lack of washrooms and other appropriate amenities; overcrowded conditions; and antiquated building systems.

In 2001, the Oxford County Library, the County of Oxford and the Township of Norwich formed a joint committee, the Norwich Branch Library Feasibility Committee, with a mandate to explore the feasibility of either expanding the existing library facility or building a new library. The Township also has had some discussions on a plan to possibly make space available for a new library facility in a future multi-use initiative.

To complete the feasibility study, F.J. Galloway Associates Inc. of London, Ontario, was retained to undertake the consultations, analysis and to develop recommendations related to the feasibility of enhancing library services in Norwich.

In support of the research, the following key activities and tasks were completed:

- Seven focus groups, involving representatives of the seniors community, young adults, municipal councillors, adult users, community organization representatives and on-site library staff.
- Interviews with senior library staff.
- Sessions with the Feasibility Committee.
- Examination of site alternatives and facility inspections with owner representatives.
- Review of appropriate population, facility, budget and other documents.
- Other inputs as appropriate to the study.

This report represents a draft of the Feasibility Study. It will be reviewed by the Feasibility Committee. Once reviewed and amended, a public forum will be undertaken to present the recommendations and to gather further community input.

## 2.0 OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

### 2.1 The Township of Norwich

The Norwich Settlement Area is primarily a rural area located in the southern portion of Oxford County. It is connected to Woodstock by Highway 59, some thirty kilometres to the north, and to the Delhi area twenty kilometres to the south.

The Norwich Settlement Area represents the former village of Norwich prior to amalgamation. Other settlement areas in the Township include Otterville and Burgessville.

The Norwich Settlement Area is home to the Norwich District Secondary School; two elementary schools; the Norwich District Arena and Community Centre; a commercial core area with a wide range of financial, retail and other services; and agricultural and agribusiness services. The area also has a significant Dutch population component.

Figure 1 illustrates the community and the existing Norwich Branch Library site.

### 2.2 The Oxford County Library System

Table 1 profiles the eighteen branch libraries operated by the Oxford Public Library and provides their volumes of use for the years 1991 to 2001.

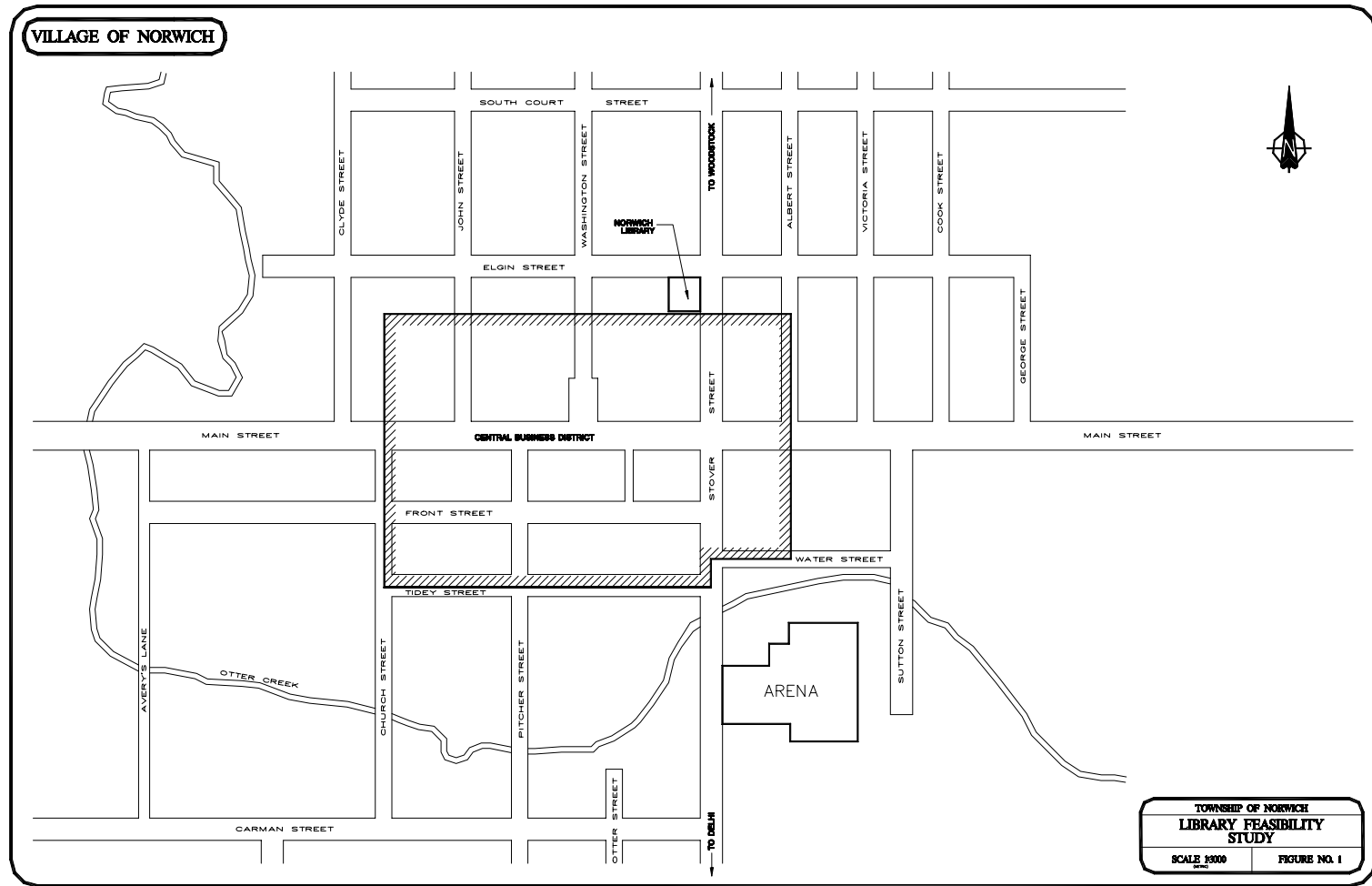
	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Beachville	4,406	4,598	4,549	4,235	4,304	3,709	4,045	4,460	4,213	3,477	3,757
Brownsville	3606	3,975	4,272	4,778	5,047	5,477	5,380	5,974	5,337	5,152	6,032
Burgessville	12,722	12,851	11,925	12,651	14,676	16,138	14,284	12,626	11,404	14,682	17,891
Drumbo	9,031	9,317	9,551	8,821	8,622	10,195	9,159	8,497	8,623	8,364	9,743
Embroy	9,783	10,618	9,618	9,498	9,404	8,299	8,404	7,526	6,267	6,140	6,864
Harrington							1,173	990	1,542	889	1,066
Hickson	6,080	5,946	6,877	7,437	8,069	7,706	7,937	8,851	8,374	9,025	10,471
Ingersoll	51,612	61,359	66,538	68,561	75,460	85,152	109,190	101,946	95,251	100,391	104,084
Innerkip	10,647	10,826	9,695	7,908	8,272	8,319	7,696	8,506	9,354	8,715	9,504
Kintore	4,510	4,518	4,829	2,885	3,821	2,876	4,335	4,745	4,148	3,759	3,395

<b>Table 1</b>											
<b>Oxford County Library 1991 to 2002</b>											
	<b>1991</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>
Mount Elgin	4,458	4,737	4,248	3,846	4,293	4,506	3,782	3,653	4,732	5,402	6,605
Norwich	17,214	18,424	16,916	16,455	15,971	19,310	19,880	17,633	24,564	32,376	37,520
Otterville	8,082	8,194	10,230	11,309	12,036	10,478	11,265	11,757	12,540	11,990	11,526
Oxford Centre	6,591	6,702	7,046	7,124	7,001	6,955	6,190	5,278	4,935	7,264	9,816
Plattsville	5,773	8,450	9,428	12,126	11,489	12,471	13,400	13,478	14,328	15,451	17,014
Princeton	12,580	14,804	13,842	12,107	12,665	12,619	13,438	13,732	13,524	13,833	15,967
Tavistock	12,828	14,949	14,821	15,200	13,626	12,917	13,885	14,251	17,770	16,650	14,803
Thamesford	18,886	22,175	21,294	17,998	19,602	21,021	20,239	18,285	18,584	16,308	17,096
*HQ-County	10,677	8,197	7,697	8,885	8,819	9,130	641				
*HQ-City	4,716	5,556	5,112	3,695	5,871	8,132	335				
*HQ-Total	15,393	13,753	12,809	12,580	14,690	17,262	976				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>214,202</b>	<b>236,196</b>	<b>238,488</b>	<b>235,519</b>	<b>249,048</b>	<b>265,410</b>	<b>274,658</b>	<b>262,188</b>	<b>265,490</b>	<b>279,868</b>	<b>303,154</b>

Table 2 provides some comparative data for the Norwich Branch Library for the period 1996 to 2001. The key outcomes are as follows:

- For 1996 and 1997, it had the third largest circulation volume within the county library system and moved to the second largest volume for the period 1998 to 2001.
- Circulation volume has almost doubled from 19,310 units in 1996 to over 37,500 units in 2001.
- For the 1996 to 1998 period, the Norwich Branch's circulation volume represented approximately 7.0% of the total county library system circulation. This grew to the 12% range in the 2000 to 2001 period.
- The Norwich Branch Library's volume increase over the period has been 94.3% compared to total library system circulation growth of 14.2 percent.

FIGURE 1



<b>Table 2</b>						
<b>Norwich Branch Public Library Utilization</b>						
	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>
Volume Rank	3	3	2	2	2	2
Volume	19,310	19,880	17,633	24,564	32,376	37,520
% of Total OPL Volume	7.2	7.2	6.7	9.3	11.7	12.4
<b>1996 to 2001 Growth Rate</b>						
Norwich						94.3
Oxford Public Library						14.2

The data indicates that the Norwich Branch has grown significantly, particularly in the last few years. This has occurred principally due to the extended hours of operation that have occurred with the funding received from Service Canada.

The data from Table 1 also indicates that there are three other libraries in the immediate service area, being Otterville, Burgessville and Oxford Centre. Their collective circulation volume in 2001 was approximately the same as for Norwich. Therefore, the Norwich Branch Library undertakes approximately 50% of the circulation volume in the broader service area.

In total, the Norwich Library is one of the busiest library resources in the county system and it represents the centerpiece of the library operations for that area of Oxford County.

### **2.3 Branch Operating Profiles**

The following points identify the key operating characteristics of the branch.

The branch is open for service thirty-five hours per week. Some fifteen of these hours are funded by the Oxford Public Library and twenty hours are paid for by grants. The long-term funding requirement for these twenty hours could change March 31, and new strategies may need to be developed.

The hours of operation for the branch are as follows:

- Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday 12:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
- Friday 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Sunday/Monday Closed

The staffing for the library involves one thirty-five hour per week person who supervises the operation. This is currently supplemented by two Community Access Program grant positions, one for thirty-five hours a week and one for fifteen hours per week. These two positions will have expired by March 31, 2002. In support of regular operations are several pages and part-time staff.

The programmatic activity at the library involves the following:

- Regular book, newspaper and related materials for circulation and in-building use.
- A Story Time program offered one time per week. It had been offered twice a week previously.
- A Craft Time program on Saturdays.
- A Youth Computer Camp on Saturdays.
- The sale of Ontario Ministry of Agriculture publications on a pilot project basis, along with the Tavistock Branch.
- A site for accessing Government of Canada services information.
- The basement area is utilized by the Norwich Learning and Employment Resources Centre, (NLERC) who provide employment resources for residents in the Norwich area who require employment supports.

## 2.4 The Library Facility

The branch is located at 21 Stover Street at Elgin Street in the Norwich Settlement Area. It lies on the southwest corner of the intersection. An elementary school is located directly across Elgin Street from the library, with other properties to the west, north and east being primarily residential. To the south, the properties are commercial and office facilities as one moves towards the main intersection of Norwich which is Stover and Main Streets.

The site abuts two streets on its north and east sides. A residential property abuts directly behind the branch to the west, and commercial properties to the south. There is no parking and a limited amount of green space associated with the building. The building covers over 85% of the site.

The Library is a Carnegie Library. It is a raised two storey, red brick facility. It has approximately five steps up to the front door. Once through the front door one goes onto a landing where one can go up another five or six steps to the main library level or go the right and down some twelve steps to the lower level where the NLERC is located, along with the only washroom.

The main library floor is one open area separated by the entrance into two equal sized rectangular areas with the service desk in the middle at the head of the stairway.

The library level of the building involves 1,213 square feet. The northern rectangular area includes three stacks of non-fiction materials, a child's reading table, telephone, references and related Service Canada information, four computers, two copiers, a scanner and a magazine rack.

The southern segment involves a child's reading table, three stacks of adult fiction, a stack of Dutch language reading material, five stacks for use by children, a telephone, one stack involving new fiction and Christian books, one stack for paperbacks and a reading table.

In the centre component is the service desk with an open staff work area and reserve shelves and two book cart stations, along with a circulation computer.

The lower level has approximately 700 square feet. The area is principally leased to NLERC who has a computer lab, resource centre materials, a classroom which is used as a meeting room in the evenings and a service desk. Also on the lower level is a washroom with a single unit, along with a janitorial closet and some small service areas.

The space leased by NLERC is based on available government funding. The lease has the following conditions:

- The leasee is Community Employment Services of Woodstock.

- The Library Board provides electricity, heat, air conditioning and water services.
- The Centre can operate from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday to Saturday.
- The library provides care taking services.
- Community Employment Services pays \$3,000 a year to the Library Board in two semi-annual payments and covers 40% of the custodial costs.

In October 2001, the Chief Building Official for the Township of Norwich undertook a brief survey and assessment of the library facility for code compliance. The following points are some of the key considerations identified.

- The structure is load-bearing brick with asphalt shingles.
- All exterior elements are in good repair with the exception of the original windows are not energy efficient.
- The site does not have onsite parking and relies on street parking contrary to Zoning By-law 19-84.
- The interior has remained relatively untouched for many years.
- Washroom facilities are undersized and are not handicapped accessible.
- A second exit from the basement is deemed questionable as to compliance.
- Landings are required at the top and the bottom of the stairs based on the Ontario Building Code.
- The furnace room requires fire rating on the ceiling and interior walls and a fire rated door.
- Although some drainage work has been done, there still is significant water leakage in the furnace room.
- The furnace system does not have ventilation make up air as required by the Ontario Building Code.
- The lay-in ceiling tile probably does not meet the Ontario Building Code.

- There is no evidence of adequate insulation.
- Floor joists are inadequate for stack use.

In summary, the building has been well maintained on the outside but requires serious upgrades internally to bring it into Code compliance and for functional use.

## 2.5 Service Area Population and Future Development

Table 3 profiles the current and projected population for the Township of Norwich for the period 1996 – 2021. This data is based on Oxford County Planning Department and 1986 Census Canada data.

	1996		2011		2021	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>0 – 4</b>	845	8.0	820	7.1	890	7.5
<b>5 – 14</b>	1,925	18.1	1610	14.0	1,800	15.3
<b>15 – 24</b>	1,525	14.4	1840	16.0	1,560	13.2
<b>25 – 44</b>	3,035	28.6	2880	25.0	3,090	26.2
<b>45 – 64</b>	2,115	19.9	3110	27.0	3,010	25.5
<b>65+</b>	1,165	11.0	1260	10.9	1,450	12.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,610</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>11520</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>11,800</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Oxford County Planning Department and 1996 Census

The total population is projected to grow from 10,610 individuals to 11,800 residents. This is an increase of 1,190 residents over twenty-six years or forty-six residents per year. This is a percentage growth of 11% or .4% a year. The growth data indicates a fairly stable population with some limited incremental growth.

As to the age profile, currently 8% of the residents are preschoolers, 18% are between the ages of 5 and 14 which is school age, and 14.4% are teenagers/young adults. Some 28.6% are 25 to 44 years old and almost 20% are 45 to 64 years of age. Some 11% are 65 years or older. In total, 26 % of the population, or just over one in four residents, are fourteen years of age or younger, with about one third of the population being under the age of eighteen.

By 2011, the population is projected to grow, however there is going to be declines in the 0 to 4, 5 to 14, and 25 to 44 year old age categories. There will be growth in the 15 to 24 year old, and 45 to 64 year old categories. There will be significant growth in this later group which reflects the movement of the ‘baby boomers’ into the older age categories. By 2021, there will be some growth in the preschool and the school age categories but a decline in the teenage and adult categories. There will be continued growth in the 25 to 44 year old category with a significant increase in seniors.

The data indicates an aging profile, some declines in the youth population up to 2011 or for the next eight to ten years. The older age categories will increase. Steady growth will be experienced in the 65 plus age category and a sharp increase proportionately for the 45 to 64 year olds from 1996 to 2011.

Overall, there will be a significant number of preschoolers and children who may have an interest in using the library. There is also going to be a significantly larger older age population, which could identify increased needs for seniors based library services, such as large print books.

Table 4 examines the Norwich Settlement Area population. The former Village of Norwich is one part of the total township population. This is an important consideration in that Burgessville, Otterville and Oxford Centre also have branch libraries and people in those catchment areas tend to use those local libraries.

<b>Table 4</b>			
<b>Norwich Settlement Catchment Population Projections</b>			
	<b>1996</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2021</b>
Norwich Village	2500	2700	3000
Catchment Area	500	600	700
Service Population	3000	3300	3700

Based on 1991 data, the former village had approximately 2,364 residents based on data provided by the Oxford County Library. Assuming an additional 500 people in the immediate service area, this results in a service population of 2,864 people in 1991.

In Table 4, a 1996 estimate of 2,500 individuals is utilized with a catchment area population of 500 residents resulting in a service population of 3,000 residents. Based on the growth perspectives provided, the service area population could increase to 3,300 in 2011 and 3,700 residents by 2021.

In discussions with the Oxford County Planning Department, they identified that there are 312 single family approved housing lots in the township. Of these, approximately 280 are in the Norwich service area which is slated for higher growth. There are currently four active development proposals but they have been underway for a long period of time as market demand has not consumed lots at a significant

rate. Growth geographically in the settlement area will be primarily in the southwest, northwest and northeast areas and not in the southeast. It was identified that the considerations related to achieving growth are market based and not infrastructure.

The county uses a residency factor of 3.2 people per household. Assuming 280 lots that could be available over the next number of years in the immediate service area, this could add 896, say 900 new residents.

Considering the current rate of growth, the number of lots, current consumption rates, a figure of 3,700 individuals in the service area appears to be the appropriate service population planning figure for approximately a twenty year time line.

### 3.0 COMMUNITY INPUT

#### 3.1 Introduction

A series of input processes was utilized to determine the community's perspective in regards to the Norwich Branch Library and its future. The process involved a survey circulated through the Norwich Gazette, and in-library surveys using the same instrument, plus focus groups and interviews.

#### 3.2 Survey Results.

In March 2002, a community survey was developed. Some 1,600 copies were distributed through the Norwich Gazette newspaper, with additional copies available at the Norwich Public Library and other branch libraries. The survey was also available on the web pages of the Oxford County Library and the Township of Norwich.

In total, 110 completed surveys were returned as follows:

- The community 59
- Norwich Branch Library 44
- Other branch libraries 7

The overall response rate was approximately 7%. Table 5 provides the results by the three survey sources and for the total survey process.

	Community		Norwich Branch		Other Branches		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>1. Residency</b>								
Within 2 km	36	60.0	30	69.8	4	57.1	70	63.6
2 to 3 km	8	13.3	5	11.6	0	0	13	11.8
3 to 5 km	6	10.0	4	9.3	1	14.3	11	10.0
5+ km	10	16.7	4	9.3	2	28.6	16	14.5
<b>2. Have Used the Norwich Branch</b>								
Yes	57	95.0	43	100.0	5	71.4	105	95.5
No	3	5.0	0	0.0	2	28.6	5	4.5
Last Year	45	84.9	38	95.0	3	60.0	86	87.8
1 to 2 Years	4	7.5	2	5.0	1	20.0	7	7.1
3 + Years	4	7.5	0	0.0	1	20.0	5	5.1

**Table 5  
Community Survey Results**

	Community		Norwich Branch		Other Branches		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>3. Use Frequency</b>								
More than once/week	6	12.2	20	46.5	2	40.0	28	28.9
Weekly	8	16.3	9	20.9	2	40.0	19	19.6
2 to 3 times/month	9	18.4	9	20.9	0	0.0	18	18.6
Monthly	11	22.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	11.3
6 to 10 times/year	6	12.2	5	11.6	0	0.0	11	11.3
2 to 5 times/year	8	16.3	0	0.0	1	20.0	9	9.3
Once/year	1	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
<b>4. Reasons for Non-use</b>								
Prefer other library sources	5	27.8	0	0.0	2	50.0	7	22.5
Use Internet	2	11.1	5	62.5	2	50.0	9	29.0
Hours Inconvenient	0	0.0	1	12.5	0	0.0	1	3.2
Do not have time	3	16.7	1	12.5	0	0.0	4	12.9
Not Interested	4	22.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	12.9
Other - Distance	4	22.2	1	12.5	0	0.0	5	16.1
<b>5. Services Utilized</b>								
Leisure Reading	50	35.7	30	28.3	3	33.3	83	32.5
References	30	21.4	20	18.9	2	22.2	52	20.4
Homework/School Projects	13	9.3	16	14.8	3	33.3	32	12.5
Use Computer/Internet	18	12.6	20	18.9	0	0.0	38	14.9
Genealogy/History	7	5.0	1	.9	0	0.0	8	3.1
Children's Programs	9	6.4	8	7.5	1	11.1	18	7.1
Employment/ Government Info.	5	3.6	7	6.6	0	0.0	12	4.7
Presentation/Films/Events	8	5.7	4	3.8	0	0.0	12	4.7
<b>6. Programs and Services to be Offered</b>								
Computer Additions/ Training	6		14		2		22	
Children's Services/ Room	10		7		2		19	
Literacy Readings/ Events/ Clubs	4		6		2		12	
Broader Selection Of Books	2		6		0		8	
Videos/Cds	5		3		0		0	
Reading Room	3		0		0		3	
Toy Lending	1		0		1		2	
Book Clubs/On-Line/ Dutch Books	2		0		0		8	
<b>7. Appearance and Operation Features for a New Library</b>								
			17		1		34	
Accessible	16		9		2		30	
Bright / Friendly / Etc.	19		14		1		21	
Larger	6		5		1		13	

<b>Table 5 Community Survey Results</b>								
	<b>Community</b>		<b>Norwich Branch</b>		<b>Other Branches</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Meeting/ Training Room(s)	6		3					
Homework /Reading Table and Chairs	2		3		1		6	
Washrooms / Modern facility	2		2		0		5	
Books off lower shelves / wider			2					
Aisles	3		1		0		5	
Parking	3		1		0		5	
Keep As Is	4		1		0		5	
Fax	0				0		1	
London Free Press	0				0		1	
<b>8. Multiple Use</b>								
NLERC								
Senior's Centre / Room	3		4		0		7	
Archives	4		2		0		6	
Youth Centre	3		1		0		4	
Child Care Centre	3		1		0		4	
Fitness Centre/ Wellness	2		1		0		3	
Bank / Office Supplies	1		3		0		4	
Coffee	0		1		0		0	
Police	1		3		0		4	
Municipal Office	2		0		0		0	
<b>9. Site Alternatives</b>								
Main Street	10	18.9	16	41.0	0		26	27.4
Central Area	33	62.3	20	51.3	3	100.0	56	58.9
Arena / Community Centre	5	9.4	2	5.1	0		7	7.4
Anywhere	3	5.7	0	0.0	0		3	3.2
Current Site	2	3.8	1	2.6	0		3	3.2
<b>10. Other Comments</b>								
Good People/Service / Vital	3		5		0		8	
Need New Library	7		4		0		6	
Crowded	1		1		0		2	
A Place of Leasing	1		0		0		1	
Save Historic Building	1		0		0		0	
Like Livingston Centre in Tillsonburg	1		0		0		1	

Related to residency, nearly two thirds of the respondents were from Norwich and a third from outside the immediate community. Twenty-five percent or one out of four respondents lived three or more

kilometres from the community. Almost 70% of the branch surveys were from people who lived in Norwich.

The rate of utilization of the Norwich Branch Library was very high, 95% for the community at large surveys, 100% for the Norwich Branch surveys and 71% from other branches. The last use of the library tended to be for individuals who had used the library within the last year, 95% for of those surveys returned at the Norwich Branch Library and 85% for the community at large surveys.

In terms of use frequency, the results were widely spread over the seven frequency categories. Nearly 48% of the respondents used the library more than once a week or weekly, another 18.6 % three times per month. Almost 80% of the respondents used the library on a weekly rate basis, and therefore, tended to be significant users of the facility.

Some reasons for not using the library or using it less were identified. Use of the Internet was the most cited reason for not using the library by nine individuals. The second rationale identified was preferring other library sources which tended to be Burgessville and Otterville. Other identifications involved distance and lack of interest.

Question 5 asked respondents to identify the services and programs they utilized at the Norwich Branch Library. Nearly one third of the respondents identified leisure reading and one quarter of the respondents references. Homework/school projects and use of the computers/Internet represented a second order of magnitude response. Children's programs were identified by 7% of the respondents, with employment and government information, presentations and genealogy activities attracting 3% to 4% identification.

The use of the library for leisure reading was significantly greater amongst the surveys from the community at large, while surveys returned through the branch had greater identification of homework and school projects and the use of the computers.

The next question asked respondents to identify programs and services they would like to see offered. Computer additions, computer training and greater computer opportunities was the most identified by twenty-two respondents, with children's services and a special children's room being identified by nineteen respondents. These were the most cited additions to the programs and services. Literacy readings and events/reading clubs were identified by twelve respondents. Overall, the two most cited offerings were identified by approximately 20% of respondents.

Question 7 asked respondents to identify preferred appearance and operational features for a new library. The three most repeated and strongly identified components were accessibility, having a bright and friendly atmosphere and being larger. These three elements dominated the responses. Many surveys had notes related to the inaccessibility of the current building and the challenges of the entrance. A meeting room was identified by thirteen individuals or approximately 13% of the respondents.

Question 8 asked respondents to identify multiple use opportunities. NLERC was cited by seven respondents and a senior's club/room by six. A number of identifications were made but at relatively low incident rates. No one idea was identified by more than 7% of the respondents.

One of the most significant questions in terms of response was in regards to site alternatives for a new branch library. Over one-half, 58.9% of respondents identified the central area of Norwich, and another 27.4% or over one-third identified Main Street. Therefore, over 86% of respondents identified the central area of Norwich. The arena/community centre was identified by 7.4% of respondents. Three respondents identified they wished the branch to stay on the current site.

The final question allowed respondents to put forth other comments. Eight respondents identified the fact the current library had excellent staff, great service and was vital to the community. Six respondents indicated a need for a new library and another two indicated that the current library was very crowded.

The data from the survey indicated the importance of the library to the user population. The users tended to use the library on a regular basis and approximately two out of three respondents came from the immediate Norwich area. Leisure reading, reference materials, computer/Internet access and schoolwork opportunities were the four dominant uses.

Enhancing a range of computer applications within the library and developing a stronger children's program and space were improvements that had some resonance with the respondents. Also, improved accessibility and being bright, friendly and larger were strongly identified as characteristics for a new library.

A limited number of multi-use opportunities were cited. The preferred site was clearly in the central area of Norwich by a very large margin.

### **3.3 Focus Groups**

A total of five focus groups were undertaken. The following points represent the results from the various groups.

#### **.1 Seniors**

Eight seniors participated in this focus group.

#### **Strengths of the Current Library**

- Staff are helpful and cooperative.

- Fast turn around time when requests are put in for books.
- The computer assistance available and access to the Internet.
- Seeing young people use the computers.
- The availability of a library in the community.

### **Concerns and Issues of the Current Library**

- Front entrance, steps and accessibility.
- Too small.
- No reading area/small reading area.
- Children can be noisy and take over the space.
- A very limited range of documentary videos.
- Very difficult to access and read the titles of books on the bottom shelves due to the darkness and the closeness of the stacks.
- Too few newspapers

### **Characteristics of a New Library**

- Fully accessible
- You can see all the levels and you don't have to bend over.
- Card catalogue on a computer that includes what's in the Norwich Library.
- Tracking program to follow what you have read.
- Spacious.

- A fax machine.
- The ability to operate a wheelchair between the aisles.
- A children's area.
- Sound proof with air-conditioning.

### **Preferred Location**

- In the central area of Norwich for access.
- Not at the arena/community centre.

### **Potential Joint Uses**

- The seniors group that meets at the former fire hall.
- The senior's group that currently meets at the museum has 50 to 60 people and appears to be adequately served there.

## **.2 Young Adults**

Six young adults participated in this focus group of which two were regular users of the library.

### **Strengths of the Current Library**

- You can order books in
- Some topics are better serviced than in the school library.
- The availability of leisure reading books.
- It's in the community.
- Many small children go to the library and use it.

- The computers

### **Concerns and Issues With the Current Library**

- Old, crowded and small.
- Very awkward to access the building, especially when people are coming in and out.
- Not enough computers.
- Needs more newer books, often go to Woodstock to get more contemporary material.
- No reading spaces.
- Students are never referred to the branch by teachers as a resource.

### **Future Library Characteristics**

- Need extensive computerization as most young people have access to computers, great familiarity and expect to be able to get information off the Internet.
- Most of the focus group individuals spent between two and four hours a day on the Internet and cited the fact that they will be using it extensively at university.
- Need more modern and contemporary books.
- A larger building with windows and nice reading areas.
- Tables and comfortable chairs.
- An improved layout.
- A significant increase in accessibility.

### **Preferred Site**

- In the central area of the community.
- In close proximity to the elementary schools.

### **.3 Adults**

Six adults participated in this focus group. All were regular users of the Norwich Branch Library.

### **Strengths of the Library**

- Availability in the community.
- Programs and services for children.
- Good group activities.
- Computers for the kids and the Community Access program where the staff are excellent and very helpful.
- Good assortment of materials and can order in what's not there.
- Excellent central location which you can use while you are in the central area.
- A good service and very impressed by the quality.
- The site where some people were first exposed to computers.
- The employment programs information.
- A friendly atmosphere and a happy place.

### **Concerns About the Branch Library**

- Physical accessibility is terrible with heavy doors, poor railings and is dangerous.

- There are limited reading resources, though there is quick turn around on orders.
- An old building.
- Only one washroom that is very small and crowded.
- Specific children's area and/or reading areas are needed.
- More newspapers, such as the London Free Press and the Globe and Mail.
- A need for a browser computer.
- A need for increased large print and specialized services, especially with an aging population.

#### **New Library Characteristics and Features**

- Lots of books. It needs to be a library.
- Children friendly.
- A community focal point for all age groups.
- A separate computer area/lab.
- Meeting place for community groups, reading clubs and so forth.
- An information centre/resource opportunities.
- Small alcoves for reading and talking, study carrels and so forth.

#### **Preferred Location**

- Central area where all groups can go.
- The arena area would have low visibility.

#### **.4 Community Representatives**

Seven individuals participated in this group and represented various clubs and organizations within the community.

##### **Strengths of the Branch Library**

- Service is excellent and the staff are outstanding.
- The computers.
- It is more than a library, as it distributes videos and other materials.
- The availability of OMAFRA publications as a sales site which has expanded the use of the library.

##### **Concerns and Weaknesses with the Branch Library**

- Physical accessibility is very difficult and unsafe.
- The structure is old and uninviting.
- The facility is crowded and needs more room.
- This is not the place for the future.

##### **Partnerships**

- More OMAFRA type partnerships that would reduce traveling and attract more users.
- Increase the government information/service centre concept.
- Oxford Community Police Office
- Relocate the Norwich Archives to the library as there is more space and potential cost economies could be gained related to staff, etc.

## **Characteristics of a New Branch Library**

- One level.
- Very accessible.
- Bright and roomy, inviting.
- Availability of parking.
- Properly staffed.
- An open atmosphere with windows.
- Eye level shelves.
- Assortment of reading materials that are more contemporary.
- A landmark for Norwich / a community place.

## **Preferred Location**

- The central area of Norwich which would help keep it alive and facilitate better shopping.
- The arena site could result in the library getting lost due its to low visibility and there would be a lot of parking conflicts.

## **Fundraising**

- Identification was made that there could be some fundraising success for a new branch. The Lions and other service clubs could be involved. There had been such precedents in the community before.
- A limit of \$100,000 was identified.
- The potential to sell the former fire hall that is used by the seniors could be considered with proceeds used to support a new library facility.

## **.5 Library and NLERC Staff**

Five members of the grant, part time and NLERC staff working in the facility participated in this focus group.

### **Strengths of the Current Branch Library.**

- The computers and the number of children who use them.
- Families bring lots of children to this site.
- Seniors are active in the facility between 12:30 and 2:30 p.m. when children aren't there.

### **Concerns and Issues with the Current Branch**

- Physical accessibility is a big issue and it is very dangerous.
- Noisy and crowded space.
- Cramped and the shelves are too close together.
- Computers in the basement should not be there.
- There is a lack of computers for the amount of demand, often resulting in very short use periods for users in order to accommodate everybody.
- Only one washroom with one unit and it is in the basement.
- No staff area for coats, lunch or privacy.
- No privacy between the computers and the study carrels, as the area is wide open.
- Children's materials are too limited.
- The library needs to develop different areas for children, adults and so forth.

- Improved tables and chairs are needed.

### **Potential Partnerships**

- NLERC could use multiple classrooms in conjunction with the library and a shared computer lab.
- Fanshawe College has been looking for a site to offer Spanish classes in Norwich.
- Community groups could utilize the facility.

### **Future Characteristics for a New Library**

- Bright, open and inviting.
- Fully accessible.
- Multiple public washrooms.
- A staff area.
- Several smaller rooms or one large room that can be divided for meetings and group activities.
- A potential computer lab
- Jointly use with other organizations/service providers.

### **Preferred Site**

- Central area of Norwich
- The arena is too far out.
- The Farmers Mutual building may be on the wrong side of Highway 59 unless a crosswalk was installed.

### **3.4 Interview Results**

Interviews were held with municipal councillors, the secondary school Librarian and the Branch Services Librarian for the Oxford County Library. The following are the collective results of these interviews.

#### **Strengths of the Current Library**

- Its availability in the community.
- The level of use it receives.
- There is a certain ambience with this historical building.
- The OMAFRA sales program, computer access and resources.
- A long history in the community.
- A valued community resource.
- Programs for young children and families.
- The unique Dutch language collection to facilitate access for that population.

#### **Concerns and Issues with the Current Library**

- An old building
- Poor and dangerous accessibility, with people having fallen.
- Crowded, and the stacks are often too close resulting in seniors not being able to see the books on the lower level.
- No room for growth inside the library or on the site.
- A flood a few years ago in the basement was an eye opener for potentially longer term problems.

- Only one washroom with one unit and it is in the basement.
- The doors are heavy and many seniors and children have a hard time opening them.
- The children's area is too small, especially for group programs, with little privacy to work on computers or in the reference areas.
- The computers are spread out, and there are too few of them for the demand, resulting in very limited use periods during peak times.
- The lighting is poor which often concerns the seniors.
- There is no staff facilities for coats, lunch or privacy.
- The loss of grant funding could be a challenge in keeping the library open longer hours.

### **Potential Partnerships**

- The Norwich Archives that are currently at the museum could be brought to the library and create a stronger local history sector.
- Building a partnership with the Dutch community to enrich the Dutch collection.
- Establishing a meeting room that would allow community groups to find a place to meet and work together.
- Oxford Community Police Office.

### **Features and Characteristics for a New Library**

- Fully accessible.
- Adequate public washrooms.
- Staff area.

- More spacious areas / inviting.
- Wider aisles
- Improved lighting and windows.
- Separate area for children.
- An area for program activities for 25 to 50 people.
- A potential computer lab, partnering with NLERC.
- Reading areas
- Alcoves and special zones.
- Parking

### **Preferred Site**

- Many interviewees felt that this study needs to identify a site based on the research. Some identification of the central area of the community due to its ability to connect with shopping and be a more visible focal point for the community.
- The arena site was identified by some due to the multi use potential, the parking available and its closeness to the secondary school.

## 4.0 OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The following observations and conclusions are identified from the research and the input. They form building blocks for developing recommendations associated with any future actions for the Norwich Branch Library.

- Service area population will likely grow over the next twenty years to approximately 3,700 individuals.
- The current branch is the second busiest in the Oxford County Library system and has had significant growth since its extended hours were instituted in 1999. A circulation level of 37,000 units per year is being experienced.
- The current building suffers from a broad array of weaknesses, some of them significantly important related to the building code and other categories of assessment:
  - # Dangerous/ poorly accessible front entrance and stairways. Heavy doors and difficult stairways to negotiate.
  - # A single unit washroom in the basement.
  - # Poor lighting.
  - # Very crowded, resulting in a noisy environment when children are present. The stacks being too close to the point where people cannot read the titles on the materials on the bottom shelves.
  - # Windows and other features are not energy efficient.
  - # No staff areas to support operations or privacy.
  - # Computers, study areas, etc. are all crammed together resulting in overlapping spaces and a lack of privacy.
  - # No parking is available as per the municipal by-law.

- # Other issues in terms of the basement area and other elements were identified related to Ontario Building Code compliance, such as the furnace room, ceiling and door, fire ratings and so forth.
- The site is nearly fully occupied by the building and has no expansion opportunities.
  - The library is principally used for leisure reading, reference materials, access to computers and the Internet and for homework/school projects.
  - Children's programs and specialized activities, including group events, are very popular and well attended.
  - Users tend to use the library at least weekly and indicate that the library is a very valuable and important resource to the community.
  - The book collections, newspapers and other materials need to be broadened in terms of selection and contemporariness, though turnover time to bring in materials is seen as good.
  - The staff and the general operations were highly valued and seen as excellent by survey respondents. The only reasons for not using the library tended to be having their own access to the Internet, not enough time or not interested.
  - Increased computer resources and training and enhanced children's services/ room were the most identified program additions, along with literacy readings and reading clubs.
  - Accessibility, being bright and friendly and a larger space were the dominant responses in terms of what a new facility should address along with accessibility, washroom and other important supports.
  - Partnership and multi-use opportunities were identified, involving NLERC, potential senior's activities/centre, Oxford Community Police and a meeting room(s) for community groups and organizations.
  - The preferred site, based on the survey responses and other inputs, was in the central area of Norwich. This was preferred by a significant margin.

The key themes that emerged from the research in terms of strategic directions for the Norwich Branch Library are as follows:

- The need for a new building that is open and inviting/bright, has significantly enhanced computer resources and can facilitate specialized groups and user activities simultaneously.
- A site in the central area of Norwich.
- Potential partnerships in terms of the Archives, a senior's group, meeting rooms, the Oxford Community Police and building on the OMAFRA sales outlet strategies for other government ministries and service providers.
- Designing a facility to serve a population of between 3,500 and 4,000 individuals over a twenty year time frame.

## 5.0 FACILITY DEVELOPMENT PROFILE

### 5.1 Space Allocation

There are several models for identifying space allocation strategies for public libraries. The two most prevalent ones are based on the Ontario Library Association's per capita sizing strategy and a volume based strategy based on material selection and use. In both cases, the formulas are driven by population size.

For the purposes of this feasibility assessment, a population of 3,700 residents is identified to be served by the new facility. Table 6 profiles the space allocation considerations.

<b>Table 6</b>				
<b>Branch Library Sizing Strategy Alternatives</b>				
	<b>.5 sq. ft. / capita</b>	<b>.6 sq. ft. / capita</b>	<b>.7 sq. ft. / Capital</b>	<b>Volume Based on Collections</b>
Library for 3700 Residents	1850	2220	2590	2470
Support and Work Areas @ 25%	555	666	777	704
Program / Meeting Room 50 people @ 15 sq. ft per person	750	750	750	750
Library Building Alone	3155	3636	4119	3924
NLERC / Partner Space	500	500	500	500
Police Services	1000	1000	1000	1000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4655</b>	<b>5136</b>	<b>5619</b>	<b>5424</b>

The Ontario Library Association's per capita model identifies a range of .5 to .7 square feet per resident to be served. The material/volume base model has an integrated formula. It was applied by the Chief Librarian for the county system. Both allocation processes are presented.

The formulas indicate that for base library space, between 1,850 and 2,590 square feet could be allocated. Support areas, including working areas, hallways, washrooms, entries, janitorial closets, storage and so forth usually adds an additional 25%, or 555 to 779 square feet.

Also, in the input to this feasibility study, the need for meeting / program room space that could be used by the community and potentially one or two service clubs, as well as be a program space for the library

was repeatedly identified. Sizing was typically suggested in the fifty person area. Using a factor of fifteen square feet per person, this would contribute another 750 square feet.

Therefore, the library and community portions of the facility could range from 3,155 square feet to 4,119 square feet.

In addition, two partnership opportunities were identified over and above the existing partnerships. In regards to the latter point, partnerships already exist in the Norwich Branch Library for government services information, as well as OMAFRA publications sales and distribution. Another partnership exists with NLERC which requires some dedicated space which is currently in the basement component of the existing library branch. Also identified in the course of the discussions, was some consideration to relocate the police office in Norwich. This could be all part of a broader strategy the township is considered using Super-build Funds whereby the current arena complex could be reconstructed into a multi-use centre with municipal offices, police, fire and other community services.

In regards to NLERC, they would require about 500 square feet for their core operations which would be less than what they are operating from now. However, they would be able to jointly use a computer lab that would be developed in the new library, as well as the meeting room would be their classroom facility on a joint use basis. Therefore, the overall space requirements could be reduced and greater joint use initiatives effectively integrated into the new facility.

In total, a facility of 3,150 square feet only for the smallest library strategy to 5,619 square feet for the most comprehensive strategy could be considered.

## **5.2 Capital Costs and Funding**

Table 7 profiles six acquisition/building options. The first five represent new construction and the sixth one represents the acquisition of an existing facility on Stover Street in the central area of Norwich.

<b>Table 7</b>						
<b>Capital Costs and Funding Strategy</b>						
<b>I. COSTS</b>	<b>3200 sq. ft. (\$)</b>	<b>3700 sq. ft. (\$)</b>	<b>4700 sq. ft. (\$)</b>	<b>5200 sq. ft. (\$)</b>	<b>5600 sq. ft. (\$)</b>	<b>Existing Building 6400 sq. ft. (\$)</b>
Construction @ \$ 125/sq. ft	400,000	463,000	588,000	650,000	700,000	0
Renovations @ \$80/sq. ft.	0	0	0	0	0	512,000
Professional Fees @ 8%	32,000	37,000	47,000	52,000	56,000	41,000
Furniture & Equipment @ 20%	80,000	93,000	118,000	130,000	140,000	102,000
Contingency @ 10%	40,000	46,000	58,000	65,000	70,000	52,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>552,000</b>	<b>639,000</b>	<b>811,000</b>	<b>897,000</b>	<b>966,000</b>	<b>707,000</b>
Land/Building Acquisition	250,000 to 350,000	250,000 to 350,000	250,000 to 350,000	250,000 to 350,000	250,000 to 350,000	250,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>802,000 to 902,000</b>	<b>889,000 to 989,000</b>	<b>1061,000 to 1161,000</b>	<b>1147,000 to 1247,000</b>	<b>1,216,000 to 1316,000</b>	<b>957,000</b>
<b>II. FUNDING SOURCES</b>						
Fundraising	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Township/County	602,000 to 702,000	689,000 to 787,000	861,000 to 961,000	947,000 to 1047,000	1016,000 to 1116,000	757,000

For new construction, the smallest version would be 3,200 square feet which is a library only at .5 square feet per capita. This would be the smallest recommended square foot strategy for library services in Norwich. The second option, at 3,700 square feet, reflects a library strategy only using the mid-range or .6 square feet per capita factor.

The third model at 4,700 square feet represents a possible cluster of different combinations, involving a library of approximately .5 square feet per capita, potential NLERC space and possibly a police services area. The 5,200 square feet option would involve the mid-sized library with NLERC and police services at full size based on the model. The 5,600 square feet option would be the largest formula, with the library, NLERC and police services space at their largest sizes.

The sixth model responds to a potential existing facility which has 6,400 square feet on three levels. However, it is recognized that the southern half of this facility is aged and would need considerable renovations. Therefore, a factor of \$80.00 per square foot has been developed for renovations which would also need to include an elevator over the three floors. The site has existing parking, high visibility and one-half of the building is only approximately twenty-five years old.

For the new construction options, \$125.00 per square foot has been utilized for construction which is the current industry planning rate. Eight percent professional fees have also been identified. Furnishings and equipment has been cited at 20% of construction value for all the furniture, computers and other inputs. not including the cost to top up some of the collections material. A contingency of 10% has been added to cover project financing, unexpected costs and so forth.

In terms of land or building acquisition costs, these have been developed based on real estate agent identification of a \$250,000 asking price for a site on Main Street, which is the smaller of the several sites examined. Therefore, a factor of \$250,000 to \$350,000 has been used for planning purposes at this time.

In terms of capital funding sources, there appears to be no reserves for a new library or Development Charges in place for the Township. The County has collected some limited development charges for libraries. Therefore, a total funding strategy would need to be undertaken. A fundraising program was tested in some of the focus groups. For the Thamesford Branch Library, which just recently opened a new 6,200 square foot facility, a \$245,000 community fundraising target was identified, of which approximately 50% has been raised to date. The Lions Club provided \$50,000 as part of the total fundraising program.

The focus group participants identified \$100,000 as a probable target. However, considering the potential participation of local service clubs and the scale of the project, a \$200,000 preliminary figure has been identified for planning purposes. The township has made application to Superbuild for funding support. It is uncertain at this time as to how this application will turnout. Also, the county and the township will

need to make financial arrangements relative to cost sharing as has occurred for the facility in Thamesford and related to the possibility of including Oxford Community Police Services if this were to occur.

A further income source would be rent payments from NLERC. They currently contribute \$3,000 a year in annual rent, which is all inclusive of utilities and space. In this new environment, the 500 square feet at \$150 a square foot for all in costs, is worth approximately \$75,000 in constructed value. Using a formula of 8% interest over 25 years, the annual capitalization charge is approximately \$6435.00 a year. It is unlikely NLERC would be able to contribute this amount as they are funded by HRDC on a fixed grant basis. Further discussions in this regard would need to be completed to determine what the feasibility strategies might be.

The value of any asset sale of the existing library or former fire station has not been incorporated into the funding model for the new branch library. This has been done due to concerns expressed that the library facility is an historic building and should not be demolished. The building probability has limited market value and would need a purchaser that is prepared to invest significant funds to upgrade the facility to contemporary standards within the context of any heritage requirements. It is possible, that the facility would be more likely used for other public services that may be already part of the township's or county's operations.

### 5.3 Operating Cost Impacts

Table 8 profiles the operating costs projected for the new facility based on the existing costs of the Norwich Branch Library.

<b>Table 8</b>		
<b>Norwich Branch Library Operating Costs</b>		
	<b>2001 Budget</b>	<b>2002 Projected</b>
Labour	\$49,775	\$57,361
Occupancy	\$3,910	\$4,340
Telephone	\$900	\$900
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$54,585</b>	<b>\$62,601</b>
Occupancy costs only per square foot	\$2.79	\$3.10
Projected Occupancy Cost New Building @ 5000 sq. ft. @ \$4.50 per sq. ft. (includes \$1.00/sq. ft. for building reserves)		\$22,500 and labour

Currently, the Norwich Branch Library has operating costs in the \$55,000 to \$63,000 range when considering labour. Occupancy costs only are \$4,800 to \$5,200 per year or \$3.10 per square foot.

Considering a building of 5,000 square foot, and using a \$4.50 per square foot ratio, which includes a \$1 per year per square foot reserve charge, occupancy costs would increase fourfold to \$22,500. This is totally due to the larger space size and reserve charge.

## **6.0 LOCATION**

### **6.1 Overview**

The current site of the Norwich Branch Library is not considered an alternative. The 1,100 square footprint of the facility covers virtually all of the site and has no parking which contravenes the by-law. A facility that is considerably larger, even if two stories, would not be able to utilize the site. To enlarge the site would require purchasing commercial and residential buildings costing in the order of \$400,000 to \$500,000, along with demolition costs. In addition, concerns have been expressed about the future of the existing building which is seen as an historical building and should likely not be demolished.

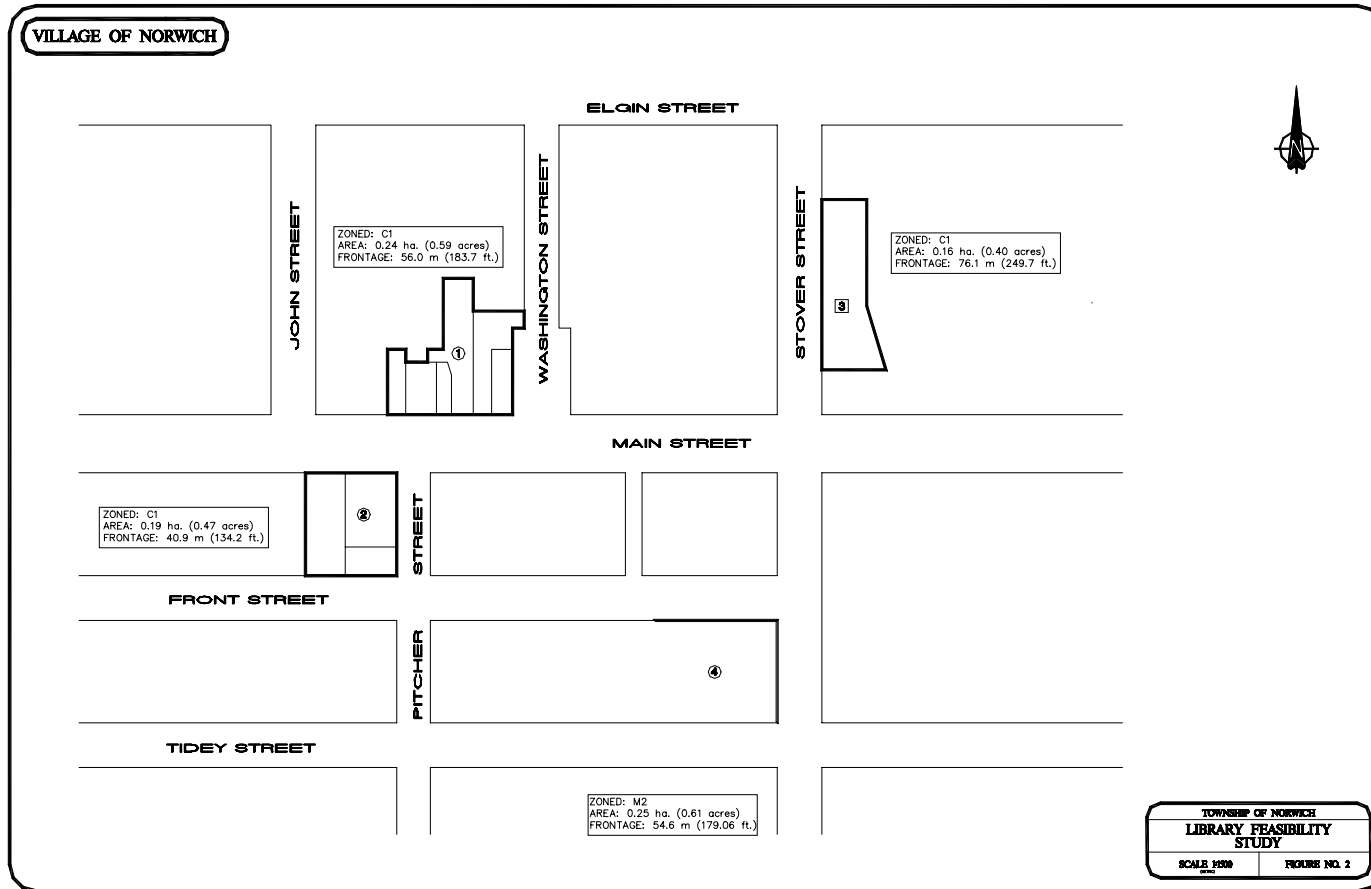
As indicated earlier, the township has undertaken some preliminary discussions and applied to Superbuild for possible conversion of the current arena into a multi-use centre. However, in more recent times, this strategy appears to have diminished in terms of Superbuild and other supports. Additionally, the survey respondents and the focus group participants were almost universal in support of a new branch library in the central area of Norwich. Many respondents and participants also spoke specifically against the arena due to parking conflicts during events, and the need to create stronger central area images and icons, the pedestrian accessibility of the central area, greater proximity to the elementary schools and other benefits. The support for the arena site is very limited and is totally contingent on a whole series of other events happening that are not directly related to the Feasibility Study. Therefore, at this time, the arena site remains an option in terms of the broader strategies of the township but cannot be further considered relative to this Feasibility Study. It is possible, that the township could transfer the spacing and other considerations into an arena model if that broader project were to proceed and it was determined that this was the best overall initiative for the township.

Figure 2 identifies four possible sites that have been investigated with the Township's Building Department, real estate agents and others.

#### **Vacant Land Beside the Post Office**

This site involves six parcels of land that are currently vacant at 44 to 64 Main Street West in Norwich. These are vacant lands beside the Post Office. It was a site that was cited by many respondents and focus group participants.

FIGURE 2



The site has the following characteristics:

- Zoned C1 commercial which permits a library.
- Would have frontage on Main Street.

## **6.2 55 Main Street West**

This is a site at the corner of Pitcher and Main Streets and is currently vacant land. It is a larger site than across Main Street. The vendor has indicated that they could have approval for a 16,000 square foot facility in a multiple floor arrangement on this site, plus parking.

This site has the following characteristics:

- Zoned C1-2 Special General Commercial zone which permits a library.
- Represents three parcels of land.

## **6.3 Tidey Street**

A vacant site on Tidey Street which fronts onto Stover Street. It also abuts Front Street.

This site has the following characteristics:

- It is vacant land zoned M2 General Industrial Zone which permits a public library.

## **6.4 Existing Building on Stover Street.**

This facility is owned by the North Waterloo Farmers Insurance at 8 to 12 Stover Street North. It is on the east side of the street just north of Main Street. The building is made up of two parts. An older part that is over eighty years old and a new part that was built in the late 1970s. It has 6,400 square feet of office space, along with over twenty-five existing parking spaces in a paved parking area.

This facility has been vacant for a long period of time and has an asking price of \$260,000. The facility is not handicapped accessible. A preliminary investigation by both the consultant and the Building Inspector indicates that the older space would need significant renovations to bring it to an acceptable public building standard.

This building has also more space than the library would require and is spread over three floors. Therefore, there would be important design challenges trying to ensure there is a contiguous library space, a space that one person could effectively operate alone.

The centre part of the building has a hallway with two load bearing walls on each side which complicates the overall redevelopment process. In order to move this facility forward, a formal structural review and design assessment would need to be completed to determine the full utility of this facility.

With the larger space considerations, the facility could have a multi-use dimension if the township were to consider moving its municipal offices or other functions into the building with the library. It is also very close to the existing library. There is a vacant property directly to the north of the site which could be acquired if a larger facility was to be considered and required additional parking.

The site is zoned C1 General Commercial which permits a library function.

## **6.5 Summary**

The Tidey Street facility is vacant and has Stover Street frontage. However, it is not on Main Street which appeared to be a priority for the respondents.

The Stover Street property is of interest but would require significant renovations. It is probably larger than for only a library facility. Therefore, its potential is contingent on other strategies that the township may be pursuing in terms of space for its various functions.

In terms of an immediate perspective, as to timing and visibility, the two sites on Main Street appear to be the most suitable. They provide distinct visibility, are in close proximity to the Post Office for one “stop shopping” for residents, do not require children to cross Stover Street to access the library and would contribute to Main Street renewal over the long term.

The availability of each of the sites may be different though they have the same owner. Also, a detailed site analysis will be required to determine the suitability of the sites so that they can support the configuration of a library and the associated parking requirements.

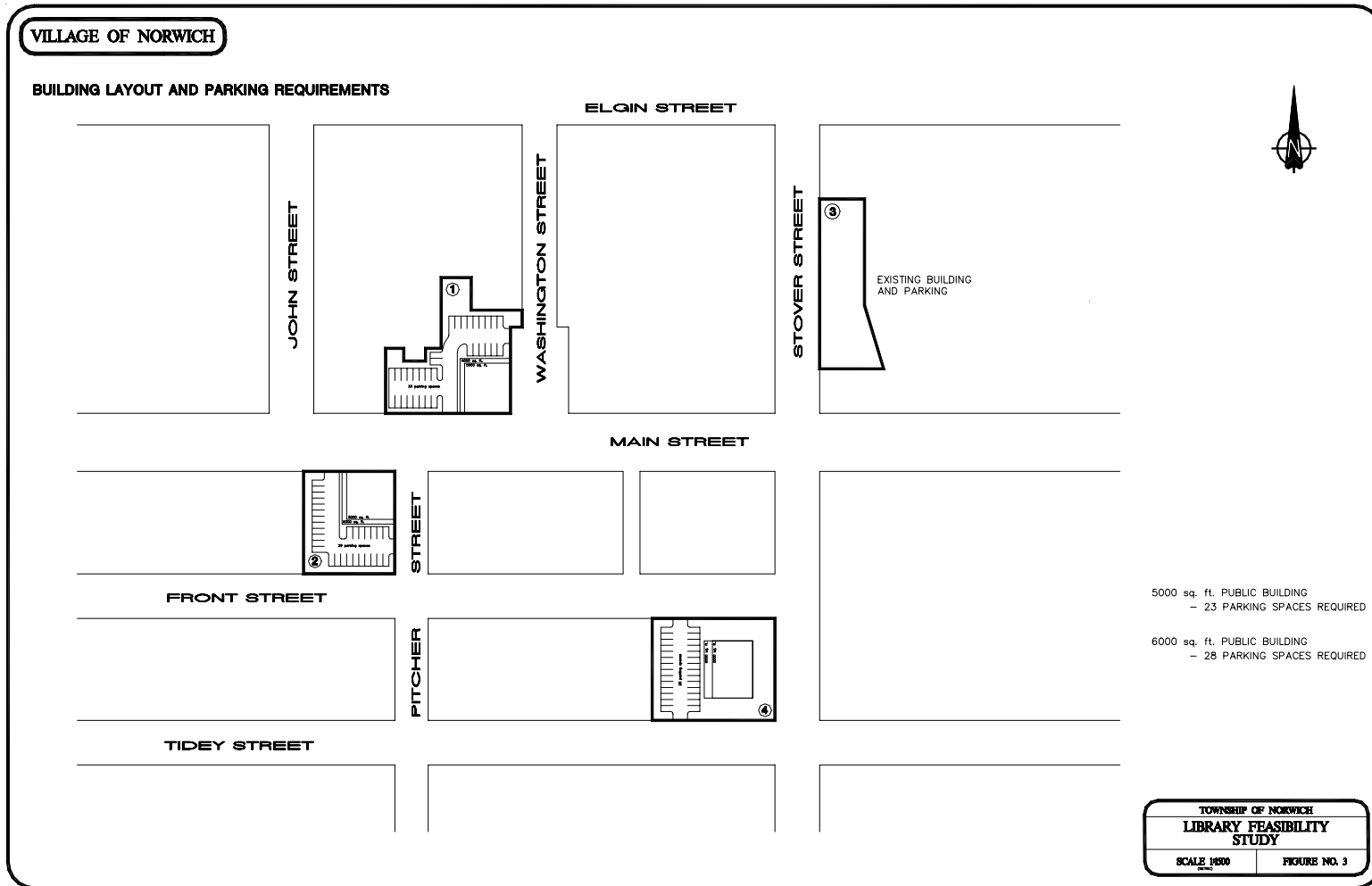
Related to parking, the Township’s By-law for office or public building is one parking space per 20 square metres of gross floor space. In making the conversions, one square metre equals 215 square feet. A 5,000 square foot facility would require twenty-three parking spaces. Using approximately 300 square feet per parking stall for both the stall itself, circulation and a larger capacity for handicapped parking areas, would result in between 7,750 square feet being required to facilitate parking.

In regards to setbacks, the following is identified within the General Commercial Zone:

- Lot coverage of up to 60% for all buildings.
- No front yard setback is required.
- A minimum of a five metre setback for the rear yard, which increases to 7.5 metres if a residential or development zone property abuts.
- No interior side yard setbacks is required unless it abuts a residential or development zone which would require a five metre setback.
- The exterior side yard has no setback requirement.
- Ten percent of the site requires landscaping.
- A five storey building would be permitted.
- The maximum square footage would be two times the lot area.

Figure 3 provides layouts in concept form for the three vacant sites. The layouts indicate all three sites can facilitate a 5,000 to 6,000 square foot facility based on the concept's use of setbacks, parking and facility shapes.

FIGURE 3



## 7.0 RECOMENDATIONS

Based on the research and inputs to date, the following recommendations have been developed for pursuing the potential feasibility of a new branch library in Norwich.

**That a branch library and related partnership facility of 4,200 to 4,700 square feet be developed.**

This size will allow for a library in the mid to upper range of the per capita base strategy identified by the Ontario Library Association and would be consistent with the volume approach. It would allow for a meeting / program space, as well as 500 square foot space for partner-based activities that are connected to the library and give greater flexibility in the future for new service integration strategies that could occur with various levels of government and other sectors. The addition of any police function would be added onto the total square footage and would need to be developed in conjunction with requirements of the Oxford Community Police Services Board and the county.

**That one of the two sites on Main Street be given preference for the potential new branch library.**

If only a library facility were to be developed, the preferred location would be on Main Street, particularly the northern property if it can adequately accommodate the library footprint and parking requirements. However, if a larger use scenario were to evolve with the municipality and/or county, then redevelopment of the Stover Street property could be considered. This could provide a more significant multi-use potential that would result in better “one-stop shopping” for municipal services and would have reduced operating costs due to common space considerations around reception, parking, meeting rooms and so forth. It also has better economic impacts. However, it must be recognized that this facility will require significant renovations, including significant accessibility features.

**The partnership opportunities be further explored in detail for the following possible inclusions into a library project. These inclusions could impact the space and location choices to some degree, involving:**

- **NLERC**
- **Oxford Community Police Board**
- **The Norwich Archives**
- **The seniors group currently in the former fire hall facility.**
- **The Lions Club**

These partnerships are at various levels of discussion at this time. Some of them will require detailed negotiations and not all of them will have immediate funding capacity for capital or operating considerations. The seniors group is currently located in the former Norwich Fire Department facility. The building is old and a possible opportunity to move from that facility was identified in the focus groups. Possibly that facility could be sold and the realized income attributed to this new facility. The seniors could utilize the meeting room as part of their program operations. The meeting room would need to be developed to facilitate a small kitchen and other support facilities.

The Archives are currently located at the Norwich Museum. Suggestions have been made that by moving them to the library they would enrich the local history capacity of the library, could be better supported by the availability of library staff and would be more accessible. However, the museum has developed these archives and needs to be approached from a partnership perspective.

The Lions Club may be interested in a facility to support its activities. Discussions with them at a detailed level would need to occur to see if this particular project would be of interest.

As to NLERC and Police Services, these have been identified throughout the course of the feasibility assessment and would need specific detailed discussions with their governing bodies to determine their potential beyond the feasibility level.