

Advisory Committee Meeting 5 Summary

November 1, 2022

Meeting Details

October 26th | 10:00 – 12:30 pm | Zoom

Objectives

The objectives of this Advisory Committee meeting were to:

- Finalize CAC recommendations.
- Confirm selection of CAC members to present recommendations to PCLS Board and Lakewood City Council.

Attendance

Advisory Committee in Attendance

David Anderson
Amelia Escobedo
Bob Estrada
Ron Irwin
Lianna Olds
Darwin Peters II
Ginny Rawlings
Timothy Rhee
Chelsey Tschosik
Bob Warfield

City of Lakewood

Becky Newton, Economic Development Manager

Pierce County Library System

Mary Getchell, Marketing and Communications
Director
Clifford Jo, Finance and Business Director

Consultant Team

Brian Murphy, BERK Consulting
Katherine Goetz, BERK Consulting

Agenda

- Item 1: Welcome and Agenda Overview
- Item 2: A Summary of What Matters Most
- Item 3: Discussion of Recommendations: Tillicum and Downtown
- Item 4: Next Steps and Meeting Close
- Item 5: Public Comment

Discussion Summary

Following each presentation summary below are bulleted comments and questions from Committee members. Where applicable, responses to each question are included in italics.

The [presentation](#) from this meeting can be found on the [project website](#) under "Project Documents."

Item 1: Welcome and Agenda Overview

Brian Murphy shared an overview of the Committee's charge, project schedule, and public comments received. Details are included in the [presentation slide deck](#).

Mary Getchell shared an update on the interim Downtown Library.

Item 2: A Summary of What Matters Most

Brian shared a summary of the priorities identified by the CAC and the community. These include having a library in Downtown and one in Tillicum, robust operating hours and sustainable maintenance, and partnerships with other providers. The CAC supports the capital investment needed, acknowledging that a capital funding bond will likely be required, with costs to taxpayers offset as much as possible via fundraising.

The criteria prioritized by the CAC are service suitability for contemporary library services, flexibility to adapt to future service models, accessibility by foot or transit, ownership of the building, affordable capital cost, and robust operating hours.

Comments / Questions:

- Regarding the annual cost to taxpayers, how many years would it take to pay for the projects?
 - *Response: Bonds would be financed for 20 years.*
- Are there other ways to fund the projects than relying on taxpayers?
 - *Response: PCLS would do fundraising and explore partnerships to share the cost.*
- What are the capital cost comparisons? For example, what does a new building cost compared to remodeling the existing building?
 - *Katherine Goetz shared the cost estimates from CAC Meeting #4.*

- More detail about the cost of renovation of the existing building would be helpful. More information about the lease at the interim location would also be helpful. PCLS could explore partnerships with senior service providers, if co-locating a senior community center is not feasible. The CAC acknowledges that final cost estimates are not necessarily known at this point.
 - *Response: Details on the existing building conditions and estimated costs are available on the project site. The timing of the interim location depends on the long-term plan for the Downtown Library. In its final report, the CAC would acknowledge the necessary investment, even if final costs are not yet known.*
- A gas station used to be on the site of the interim library. Is the site safe?
 - *Response: The owners who purchased the property from Chevron did further remediation at the site. PCLS had an environmental consultant review the reports and is confident the site is safe.*
- Is there a time limit on the lease for the interim site?
 - *PCLS does not have this information.*
- CAC members expressed support for the financial investment and note that if the community values the library, they will need to support it financially.

Item 3: Discussion of Recommendations: Tillicum and Downtown

Tillicum

Brian shared draft tiered recommendations based on what the CAC preferred, as well as some additional considerations as noted in the [presentation slide deck](#). Becky Newton shared potential accessibility and site improvements for the parcel owned by the City.

Comments / Questions:

- Location is the most important factor and compels a partnership with the owners of the current building. The City of Lakewood should take the lead on this. Tillicum is isolated and needs its own library.
- A suggestion was made to add a recommendation for the Library System to acquire a property where the library and other services could be co-located. Multiple CAC members supported this idea.
- Would PCLS have to pay for the property owned by the City?
 - *Response: The City of Lakewood has not determined how it would sell the property to PCLS.*
- Could the City sell the property it owns to support acquisition of another parcel?
 - *Response: The City could consider selling the property and purchasing another property. However, the City has not considered this as of yet.*
- Are there Garry Oaks on the property?
 - *Response: Yes. The layout of the building would determine if trees would need to be removed.*
- Are there any environmental concerns on the city-owned parcel?

- *Response: There is no contamination on the property. The sewer for the property runs along Union Avenue.*
- Partnerships would be valuable to the community, such as vocational training in partnership with Clover Park Technical College.
- This is an opportunity for the City to show interest in investing in Tillicum.
- One CAC member expressed interest in speeding up the process by using the land already owned by the City.
- Another CAC member noted that the city-owned parcel has good visibility, in comparison to the current library. More people would use it if it were along the main road.
- A CAC member chatted a request: Could staff get updated documents on the issues, if any, for surrounding buildings in Tillicum (already city owned) and Lakewood locations, and the interim location?
- **7 CAC members support the modified set of recommendations:**
 - If the property where the existing Tillicum Library is located can be acquired: The CAC recommends renovating the existing building or rebuilding on the existing site.
 - If this is not financially or practically feasible: The CAC recommends pursuing a location near the existing library.
 - If this is not financially or practically feasible: The CAC recommends building on the parcel currently owned by the City.
- **2 CAC members support having a library on the city-owned parcel because of its location and because it could accelerate the process.**

Downtown

Brian shared draft tiered recommendations based on what the CAC preferred, as well as some additional considerations as noted in the [presentation slide deck](#).

Comments / Questions:

- One member recommended building a new library over renovating the existing building.
- The current location is an ideal site. The City of Lakewood deserves a new, modern building, but it can be a smaller footprint. This would help alleviate concerns about parking. PCLS should consider building up.
- There is no way to resolve parking without replacing the building. It is recommended to replace the building to accommodate parking. The space could be used more efficiently.
- A CAC member made a recommendation to not include the discussion of co-location with a senior community center in the CAC's final report.
- A new library should try to retain some features of the current building.
- There is a concern there are no other viable sites in Downtown Lakewood.

- There is a concern that planning for space for a senior community center could take away from library space.
- Why does the City want to pursue senior center?
 - *Response: The City sees an opportunity to partner and have a senior community center in an owned space instead of leading space from Pierce County. The City has explored other partnership opportunities.*
- A new building could cost the same as remodeling the existing building. Keeping the language about using the same type of architecture as the current building may be a constraint.
- Some CAC members do not want to miss out on an opportunity to build a larger library.
- One member would reconsider if historical preservation of the existing building moves forward.
- Did Lakewood City Council talk about de-annexing from PCLS?
 - *Response: The project team is not part of those conversations and is working on behalf of the PCLS Board.*
- **5 CAC members recommend taking out the consideration of the senior community center.** The focus on partnership opportunities will remain in the earlier discussion of what matters most.
- **7 CAC members support the modified set of recommendations:**
 - The CAC's preference is to keep the library at the same location, building a new library.
 - If that is not possible: The CAC recommends building a new library in an equally accessible location.
- **2 CAC members support building a larger library on a different location.**
- A CAC member noted that the CAC should not necessarily expect PCLS Board to adopt these recommendations. The Board has more context to consider, as well as its responsibility to the community.

Item 4: Next Steps and Meeting Close

- The CAC has settled on recommendations for Downtown and for Tillicum.
- Ginny and Darwin have volunteered to represent the CAC on Nov. 17, 6-7pm.
 - BERK will provide a summary and presentation.
 - Other CAC members are invited and encouraged to come.

Public Comment

- Two members of the public commented during this portion of the meeting. They encouraged the City to explore de-annexing from PCLS.