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Spencer Public Library

Spencer, Iowa

A SURVEY OF THE LIBRARY BUILDING NEEDS

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Iowa
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BY

FREDERICK WEZEMAN

1964

IOWA STATE TRAVELING LIBRARY
DES MOINES, IOWA

Iowa
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Wezeman
Spencer public library,
Spencer, Iowa

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SPENCER PUBLIC LIBRARY

SPENCER, IOWA

A SURVEY OF THE BUILDING NEEDS

BY: FREDERICK WEZEMAN

PUBLIC LIBRARY CONSULTANT

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

SPENCER PUBLIC LIBRARY

SPENCER, IOWA

1964

IOWA STATE TRAVELING LIBRARY
DES MOINES, IOWA

ABOUT THE AUTHOR . . .

Frederick Wezeman is an Associate Professor in Library Science at the Library School of the University of Minnesota. Previously he was director of the public library in Racine, Wisconsin and Oak Park, Illinois. His surveys of public libraries include:

- Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin, Public Library Survey.
Public Libraries of Minneapolis and Hennepin County:
A Survey of the Factors Affecting Their Future Relations.
Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Public Library: A Survey of Its Resources, Services, and Opportunities for Growth.
Public Library Service, Anoka County, Minnesota: A Survey and A Plan.
The Helena Public Library, Helena, Montana: A Survey--Public Library Service.
The Fond du Lac Public Library, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin: A Survey. Recommendations for Future Development and Planning.
Great Falls Public Library, Great Falls, Montana: A Survey. Recommendations for Future Development and Planning.
Public Library Service, Ramsey County, Minnesota. A Survey and A Plan.
Tulsa Public Library. A Survey--Recommendations for Future Development and Planning. Tulsa, Oklahoma.
Extension Services of the Public Library of Des Moines, Iowa.
Building Survey and Proposals for a New Central Library. Manitowoc, Wisconsin.
Hopkins Public Library, Hopkins, Minnesota: A Survey and Recommendation for Future Development and Planning.
Extension of Library Service in the Birmingham-Bloomfield Area of Michigan: A Survey, Recommendations for Future Development and Planning. Baldwin, Michigan
A Survey of the Public Library. Sioux City Public Library, Sioux City, Iowa.
A Survey of the Public Library. Billings Public Library, Billings, Montana.

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SPENCER

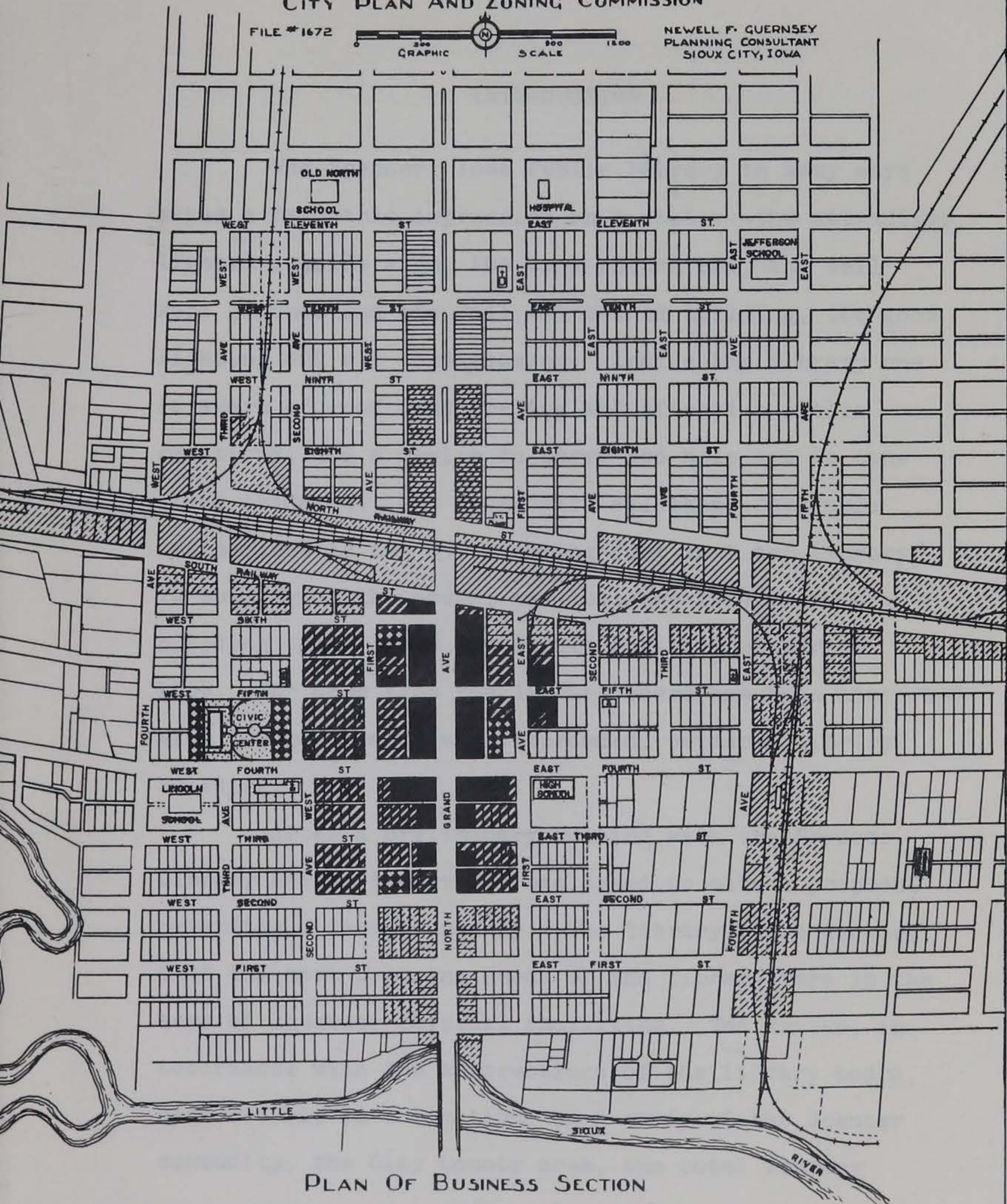
IOWA

CITY PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION

FILE #1672



NEWELL F. GUERNSEY
PLANNING CONSULTANT
SIOUX CITY, IOWA



PLAN OF BUSINESS SECTION

LEGEND

-  PRESENT RETAIL
-  PROPOSED FUTURE RETAIL
-  PRESENT COMMERCIAL & LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
-  PROPOSED FUTURE COMMERCIAL & LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
-  PROPOSED FUTURE CIVIC CENTER
-  OFF-STREET PARKING

INTRODUCTION

The Spencer, Iowa Public Library in many ways makes a favorable impression on a visitor--the attractive, lighted outside sign, the book return box, the well kept grounds and the well maintained building, the good lighting and air conditioning. Inside the library one is aware of good housekeeping and effective public relations, and a desire to serve and help are in constant evidence. But along with all these favorable impressions is the overwhelming fact that the library is bulging at the seams, and that the 1904 Carnegie building is entirely inadequate for the Spencer of 1964. For some time the library board has been concerned with the problem of an overcrowded, outdated library building.

After a preliminary meeting with the Spencer Library Board, the writer was asked to make a proposal regarding a library survey. The library board decided that the most pressing needs of the library were in the area of adequate physical facilities. The writer, in accordance with the instructions of the library board, centered his investigations on a study of the Spencer community, the Clay County area, the total library

resources of the city and county, anticipated community growth and development, present library facilities and the future public library building needs of Spencer.

The writer has made a thorough study of the various factors bearing on the library building problem. The recommendations in this report are made on the basis of his past experience in public library service, a study of the Spencer situation, personal interviews, reports and other surveys. In all analysis the writer has attempted to be objective, impartial and critical.

Thanks and appreciation for assistance in the preparation of this report are due Blanche Watts, Librarian and her staff, Mr. Tom Tuttle, President and members of the library board, Mayor G. H. Sondergaard, City Clerk Robert J. Van Daalen, Superintendent of Schools Doyle Carpenter, and Orville Kinworthy, Executive Secretary of the Spencer Chamber of Commerce.

Spencer, Iowa is fortunate to have an unusual combination, a professionally trained head librarian, with high standards of service, a capable and dedicated staff, and an alert and concerned library board. All are constantly striving to give superior public library service to their community.

CHAPTER I

Brief Library History

Library service was started in 1883 by a few local ladies who operated from their homes. In 1890 a building was rented on South Main Street and in 1892 the City Council voted a levy for its partial support. In 1902 an appeal was made for Carnegie funds for a library building and a gift of \$10,000 was given provided Spencer furnish the site and support. The Ladies Library Association traded Lot 7, Block E on Main Street for Lots 14, 15, 16, Block B, corner of East Third and First Avenue East. The trade was made with Dr. McCallister a local physician.

The cornerstone of the present building was laid on July 6, 1904. Cy Taylor was the contractor and the foundation was built of Sioux Falls granite.

In May of 1948 a new children's room was opened in the basement. In 1957 the building was air conditioned, in 1958 a new roof was installed and in 1959 new lights were installed throughout the library.

Need for a New Library Building-- Inadequacies of Present Library Building

1. Difficult and costly to staff. At present when the adult and children's department are open they

must be separately staffed. In a new library building the children's department could be kept open at all times, and could be under the surveillance of the central charging desk, during the evening hours.

2. Ineffective merchandising of library materials. Because of the cut up nature of the library rooms, it is difficult for the library customer to know what types of material are available or how and where they are housed. There is no room for special exhibits or the opportunity to carry on reading guidance by bringing together books on a shelf or table on some specific subject such as: Great Biographies or Classic Novels or Notable Books of 1964.

3. There is inadequate room for readers to sit and use the materials of the library. At present there is table space for only 40 library users; of which 32 seats are in the adult room and 8 seats in the children's room. Total readers seats in the entire building including lounge chairs is 54.

4. There is no room for an adequate collection of library materials. Not only is there insufficient room for the book collection, but also for back files of periodicals, for pamphlets, and for reference books. It is difficult to expand the book collection because there is no place to put the books.

5. There is no meeting room or conference room. Such a multipurpose room could be used for conferences, small group meetings, staff meetings, story hours, and library board meetings.

6. There are inadequate rest room and staff room facilities. The staff has no place to go for their coffee break. Because of the overcrowded conditions there is no place for the staff to relax for a few minutes or place for a cot where library customers, children or adults, or staff members who are indisposed can rest for a while.

7. The stairs are an added burden for the senior citizen. The modern library building has a street level entrance, with no steps to discourage library use by the aged and the infirm.

8. There is inadequate office and workroom space. The office doubles as a workroom so that the ordering, cataloging, processing, repairing and re-binding of books, magazines and pamphlets, and the other clerical activity of the library must all take place in the crowded and cramped quarters of the library office. At the present time there is not one square foot of available space in the entire library building.

9. The present building has less than one-third of the needed and required floor space.

10. A 1904 Carnegie Library is inadequate and outmoded for a 1964 city. Tremendous changes have taken place in the educational background of the citizens, in the number of young people in school, or adults continuing their education, in the availability of and demand for specialized books on a variety of subjects, and in the need for journals, books and information by business and industry.

What a New Public Library
Building Will Mean to Spencer

A symbol of the importance of books, reading, and learning.--A new public library building embodying the three F's of modern architecture (Functional, Friendly, Flexible) will advertise to all the citizens of Spencer the pleasures and opportunities in the creative use of leisure time.

A learning place for the gifted student.--The gifted student will make the library his own personal university. With a new building and adequate room for books, magazines, etc., local teachers can with confidence urge gifted students to pursue at their own speed and inclination their special paths of research and interests. The public library represents one of the most economical methods of providing the gifted student with special incentives and resources.

A building of simple beauty and drawing power for the downtown area.--The erection of a new public library is of economic interest to every merchant in Spencer. A recent study indicated that more than 7,000 customers came to the downtown Minneapolis Public Library, on a Saturday in the spring of 1963. People often combine a visit to the public library with a shopping trip. As the center of a large trading area, Spencer draws people from many miles. These customers could easily find a trip to the public library another reason for coming to Spencer.

A significant and important selling point to industry and business looking for an Iowa headquarters.--All over the country a tremendous competitive struggle is going on between states, regions, and cities for new industry and business. Communication--reports, books, magazines, articles, government publications--these are vital to industry and business today. Even larger firms, which can afford their own service, must depend on the more complete and expensive resources of the public library. The small business, whose future can often mean so much to the local community, finds the resources of the public library invaluable and indispensable.

A new public library building would sell Spencer to industry and business looking for a place to locate.

A new public library building would place Spencer in a position to establish itself as a regional center for public library service.

A place of inspiration and education for all citizens.--As an educational institution, the public library is unique in that its customers come from all age groups, and use of the library can continue practically from the "cradle to the grave." A new library building would be an untold blessing to the children, youth, young adults, adults, and senior citizens of the Spencer community.

No other expenditure of public funds for capital improvements would give as great a return as a new public library building for Spencer.--A new public library would be of immediate and lasting benefit to every age group of the community, to all professional and business groups, to industry, to every student and teacher, to the aged and the unemployed. A new public library building would mark Spencer as a city of progress, aware of the benefits of culture and education, a pace setting city of Iowa.

CHAPTER II

SPENCER, IOWA

A Brief Profile of the Community

Spencer, the County Seat and largest city of Clay County, is situated along the Little Sioux River in northwestern Iowa--100 miles northeast of Sioux City. Incorporated in 1880 with a population of 884, Spencer has steadily grown to its present population of 9,200 (estimated). The city's population in 1960 was 8,864; a gain of 19.0 per cent over 1950.

Located in the heart of one of the richest agricultural regions in the world, Spencer's economy is typical of many mid-western cities. Its economic activity is built around two major functions--serving as the wholesale, retail, professional, and cultural center for the surrounding area, and engaging in the manufacture and distribution of agricultural products.

The median family income in Spencer was \$5,396 in 1959; somewhat higher than the median family income in Iowa, but lower than the United States median. Earning more than \$6,000 in 1959 were 41.6 per cent of Spencer's families, and 12.6 per cent had incomes of \$10,000 or more. (See Table 4.)

The average age of Spencer's 8,864 citizen's was 33.9 years in 1960; roughly three years older than the average in Clay County and Iowa, and four years older than the average in the United States. (See Table 2.) The income producing group (ages 18-64) is smaller in Spencer. As a result, the percentage of the population under 18 years and over 65 years is larger than in the United States as a whole.

Spencer can be justifiably proud of the educational level of its inhabitants. The average number of school years completed by persons 25 years old and older is 12.2 years, as compared with the Iowa average of 11.3 years and the United States average of 10.6 years. (See Table 3.) Fifty-seven per cent of Spencer's adult population have completed high school, and only 1.5 per cent have completed less than five grades.

The City of Spencer has the Mayor-Council form of government, and currently operates with a tax levy of 21.07 mills. The tax rate has been fairly constant over the past several years. The present assessed valuation of all property is \$19,863,978. The city enjoys an enviable debt situation, with less than \$500,000 in general obligation bonds currently outstanding. A Comprehensive Plan for guiding future growth and development was prepared in 1959.

Of the 3,018 acres within the city in 1963; 965 were devoted to agricultural use. There is ample room for population and industrial expansion within the present city limits. Considering Spencer's fairly rapid growth in the past few decades--in spite of generally declining rural populations in the midwest--the land not now devoted to urban use will be needed to provide for the future.

As noted in an earlier paragraph, Spencer's main economic activities are dependent upon the surrounding agricultural area--especially Clay County. In 1959 there were 1,577 farms in Clay County, with an average land and buildings value of \$68,551. The total value of farm crops sold in 1959 was \$25,602,000. Of this figure 66 per cent was from the sale of livestock and 28 per cent from the sale of field crops. The value of Clay County's farms, both by average farm value and average acre value, are consistently higher than average farm values in Iowa, and also higher than those in neighboring states.

Unlike many farm belt counties, the population of Clay County is slowly increasing. The population was 18,103 in 1950; 18,504 in 1960; and 18,800 (estimated) in 1964. Since, however, Spencer's population increases have been numerically larger than Clay County's increases,

the actual rural population of the county has been steadily decreasing.

From this brief profile of the City of Spencer, it can be readily established that the area has the resources, the need, and the potential clientele for public library service of a superior quality.

TABLE 1
POPULATION INCREASE

Area	1950 Population	1960 Population	Per cent Increase
Spencer	7,446	8,864	19.0
Clay County	18,103	18,504	2.2
Iowa.	2,621,073	2,757,537	5.2
United States	151,325,798	179,323,175	18.5

TABLE 2
AGE LEVEL OF POPULATION--1960

Area	Median Age (years)	Under 18 Per cent	18-64 Per cent	Over 65 Per cent
Spencer	33.9	35.3	52.0	12.7
Clay County	30.7	37.6	50.9	11.4
Iowa.	30.3	35.8	52.3	11.9
United States	29.3	30.1	60.7	9.2

TABLE 3
FORMAL EDUCATION OF PERSONS TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AND
OLDER, 1960

Area	Median School Years Completed	Completed Less Than 5 Grades Per cent	Completed Four Years of High School or More Per cent
Spencer	12.2	1.5	57.0
Clay County	11.9	1.5	54.1
Iowa	11.3	2.5	46.4
United States	10.6	8.4	41.1

TABLE 4
FAMILY INCOME, 1959

Area	Median Family Income	Less Than \$3,000 Per cent	\$6,000 or More Per cent	\$10,000 or More Per cent
Spencer	\$5,396	20.3	41.6	12.6
Clay County	\$4,441	31.4	31.3	9.1
Iowa	\$5,069	36.5	38.1	10.7
United States	\$5,657	21.4	41.1	12.2

TABLE 5
NON-WHITE POPULATION, 1960

Area	Number of Non-Whites	Per cent of Total Population
Spencer	2	0.023
Clay County	2	0.010
Iowa	28,828	1.0
United States	20,491,443	11.4

TABLE 6
EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS RESIDING IN SPENCER, IOWA, 1960
(By Type of Industry)

Industry	Number
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries	91
Mining	16
Construction	225
Durable goods manufacturing	108
Nondurable goods manufacturing	323
Transportation, communication, and utilities	248
Wholesale and retail trade	1,095
Finance, insurance, and real estate	194
Business and repair services	79
Personal services	284
Entertainment and recreation services	61
Professional and related services	298
Public administration	113
Industry not reported	193
Total Employed	3,328

Sources for information contained in this profile include the 1960 Census of Population, the 1959 Census of Agriculture, Spencer and Its Comprehensive Plan, and

1963 Financial and Statistical Report for the City of
Spencer, Iowa.

BUILDING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SPENCER PUBLIC LIBRARY
 Present Building on 1st Street

What are the alternative solutions to the Spencer
 library building problem. The present library building,
 constructed in 1904 at a cost of \$10,000, a gift of
 Andrew Carnegie, is of brick construction with stone
 trim. There are no steel beams in the building, interior
 walls are load bearing, and the building is of masonry and
 masonry construction. The building is not fireproof
 and the main floor has only one exit. In another section
 of this report the writer has set forth in detail the
 urgent need for a new library building. The alternatives
 for the library board are as follows:

1. Build a new library on the present site.
2. Build a new library on some other site and
 use the present building for some other
 purpose, or sell the building and land.
3. Build an addition to the present library.

Plan 1. A New Spencer Public Library on the Present Site

The present building has had considerable use and
 for some 60 years. Its original cost, a gift to the city

CHAPTER III

BUILDING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SPENCER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Remodel, Addition or New Building

What are the alternative solutions to the Spencer library building problem. The present library building, constructed in 1904 at a cost of \$10,000, a gift of Andrew Carnegie, is of brick construction with stone trim. There are no steel beams in the building, interior walls are load bearing, and the building is of wood and masonry construction. The building is not fireproof, and the main floor has only one exit. In another section of this report the writer has set forth in detail the urgent need for a new library building. The alternatives for the library board are as follows:

1. Build a new library on the present site.
2. Build a new library on some other site and use the present building for some other purpose, or sell the building and land.
3. Build an addition to the present library.

PLAN I. A New Spencer Public Library on the Present Site

The present building has had continued hard use for some 60 years. Its original cost, a gift to the city

by Andrew Carnegie, was \$10,000. Except for the cost of maintaining the present library the City of Spencer has never spent any money on a public library building.

The major recommendation of this report is that Spencer build a new public library on the present site.--

The arguments in favor of this decision are as follows:

1. Any money spent in remodeling or adding on to the present structure would in the long run be an uneconomical use of public funds.
2. The present library is not fireproof.
3. The present site is a good one for a public library. Moving to another site would increase the cost of the new library and there is a danger that the new site might not be as good as the present one.
4. The best use of the present site can only be made by a completely new public library building.
5. An addition to the present building cannot be made without increasing library operating costs. A combination of new and old building would be difficult to supervise and administer.

6. In the long run additions to or remodeling of the present library would be more expensive than an entirely new, functional library building.

PLAN II. Build a New Library on Some Other Site

If a superior site should be available, closer to the heart of the business district than the present site, and sufficiently large to meet all public library building requirements then Plan II might be considered as an alternative to Plan I. The objections to another site are the cost involved and the danger that the new site may not be as good as the present site.

PLAN III. An Addition to the Present Library

Of the 2,409 "Carnegie Libraries," 1,681 were built in the United States. These libraries had certain architectural and structural characteristics and similarities, due to the fact that the donor, Andrew Carnegie, made available recommended plans for the libraries. One of the remodeling treatments given the Carnegie libraries is the "wrap around." New additions are wrapped around the old Carnegie library building. In the opinion of the writer this type of remodeling or addition is in the long run not an economical solution to the problem.

Architecturally the result is often not a pleasing one. Such a remodeled building, or a building with an addition, has various floor levels which make the movement of personnel and materials throughout the library tedious and time consuming. Supervision, maintenance and administrative costs and problems are compounded rather than simplified.

The present library building is simply not worth any substantial investment of money for remodeling.

An addition to the present building was seriously considered as a solution to the Spencer library problem, and this solution was given much thought and study, however, the architectural results would be awkward, the layout of services and materials difficult, and the entire project more costly than a new building.

Other library resources of the Spencer area
special libraries.--There are no special libraries as such in the Spencer area. Various local industries have modest collections of specialized materials relating to their work. Given an adequate building the public library could do a much better job of serving the specialized needs of industry, business and government.

School libraries.--Like most school systems, the Spencer Public Schools are aware of the need for improved

school library services and resources. The elementary schools have classroom collections but no central library. In the new high school building the library will occupy a room 68 x 32 feet and the present high school library will become a junior high library. The only librarian on the public school staff is the high school librarian. This year (1963-1964) \$2,500 has been budgeted for books for the elementary schools and \$4,500 for the high school. Last year \$2,000 was spent for books for the high school library, or about \$1.82 per student. There are 4,978 volumes in the high school library and seats for 67 students.

Due to proximity and the lack of adequate resources in the high school library, the high school students have depended heavily on the public library. The library resources of the public schools need to be strengthened. The high school library book collection is minimal.

Table 7 indicates the strength of library resources in Spencer and how small in comparison the other library collections and resources are in the rest of the county. For any serious library use the customer will most likely have to depend on the Spencer Public Library. In Clay County, 11,268 residents have library service and 7,236 are without library service,

TABLE 7

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN CLAY COUNTY--1963 STATISTICS^a

Libraries	Hours Open	1960 Population	Income	Book Budget	Total Volumes	Circulation
Everly	6	668	871	196	2,139	3,574
Peterson	10	565	4,032	545	6,703	4,172
Royal.	2	475	478	169	1,496	1,205
Spencer.	64	8,864	29,790	6,249	28,225	91,478
Webb	8	696	1,087	551	4,494	4,758

^aInformation obtained from Bibliography Item 6.

that is the latter group does not have legal access to a public library. (See Bibliography Item 6, p. 224.)

An opportunity for Spencer.--More and more cities are being considered not only as centers of commerce and industry but also as cultural, education, and medical centers. Cities are proud to have the reputation as a medical center, and this has a very decided economic value. So also it is to the best interests of the Spencer economy to take advantage of its opportunity to become the center for a regional library system. Some may view this as too ambitious a plan, but certainly Spencer should immediately take steps to form a county library system, with member libraries maintaining their autonomy but sharing the benefits of a federated system of libraries.

Size of Needed New Library Buildings

Population size of the community served is the single most important factor determining how large the library building should be. Authorities agree that any new building should be designed to handle the expected community growth for about twenty years. And it must be noted that most library buildings have to serve for forty years or more.

One report made the statement: "If the 1960

relationship between the population of Spencer and the population of the state exists in 1976, the population of Spencer should be from 11,500 to 12,000." (Bibliography Item 8.) The estimated present population of Spencer is 9,200 and that of Clay County, 18,800.

Considering the population growth of the City of Spencer for the next 20 years and the library needs of Clay County, a recommended population served figure for the Spencer Public Library for 1985 is 18,000. In almost every instance public libraries have not been built large enough and too often fairly new public library buildings are found within a few years of use to be too small. A new library building always produces a tremendous increase in library use.

In addition to population growth, one must also take into account additional educational institutions such as a junior college or a new vocational high school plus the distinct possibility that new industry and business coming to Spencer in the future years will have increasing need for adequate public library service. Farms are tending to become larger and the rural population is shrinking, small towns are becoming smaller and more and more people tend to live in the cities. These and normal population predictions are the reasons why an estimated population served by the Spencer Public

Space requirements
Estimated population served 18,000.

Seating requirements.--Four seats per thousand
ion, or approximately 72 seats x 40 square feet =
quare feet.

Bookshelving requirements.--2.5 books per capita
0 = 45,000 volumes ÷ 10 = 4,500 square feet.

Book circulation requirements.--Average estimated
per capita x 18,000 = 126,000 ÷ 40 = 3,150 square

much room would be available for the various areas, and departments of the library. However, a general statement of the facilities available in the new building can be made.

The new library would have adequate lobby space with perhaps some lounging furniture with book displays and browsing collections. The children's area would be at least double the present 770 square feet of basement space. It would be located on the main floor of the library thus enhancing the opportunity of a family visit to the library. There would be a separate area for story telling so that the children's collection would be available at the time story telling was in progress.

The adult area would include stack area, reference area and reference study tables, general reading and browsing area. Ample room would be provided for the display and use of periodicals and newspapers. There would be sufficient shelving space for a considerable collection of business reference materials. Close to the reference area would be the stacks holding back files of periodicals. Now most of these are inconveniently stored in the basement.

Suitable space would be provided for the librarian's office, for workroom, bookbinding and mending, cataloging and ordering and the processing of library materials.

The present building has 4,218 square feet of space, distributed on two floors, much of it is uneconomical to use because of the cut up nature of the building and a good portion of this area is used up by the double stairway to the basement and the stairway from the lobby to the main floor. The new building would have three times the present area, or 13,000 square feet of space. This space would be much more economical to use and little or none of it would be wasted by stairways or interior walls.

The new library would, have room for more than 45,000 volumes, while the present library is crammed to capacity with 28,255 volumes.

The new library would, of course, be fireproof.

Some General Specifications for the New
Spencer Public Library Building

The new library should be a pleasant, handsome building which avoids the monumental in design and emphasizes the practical and functional daily use of the building. The entrance, close to the sidewalk and

at grade level, should have a nearby book return slot. Once inside the library the customer should have convenient and easy access to the various service areas, adult and juvenile. Within the adult area would be various study areas and the floor stacks containing library materials. Most of these materials, books, magazines, etc., would be on open shelves for convenient customer self-service and browsing. The main service desk would have complete and easy surveillance of the entire building so that on off hours the library could be open with a minimum of staff and yet all parts of the library would be available for use.

The combination meeting room, story hours room and board meeting room should be so located that it can be used independently or in conjunction with the rest of the library.

The public toilets in a library can be a source of much maintenance and discipline difficulties. Their location should provide staff control and at the same time be accessible to the public without interfering with library routines. There should be adequate sound conditioning.

To whatever extent possible, interior load bearing walls, corridors and permanent support structures should be avoided. Service areas should be

defined primarily by means of furniture and bookshelf arrangement.

The building should be completely air conditioned with full temperature control for both heating and cooling.

The electrical lighting level should be a minimum of fifty foot candles at floor level with a level approaching seventy foot candles at table height. Lighting time switches for both interior and exterior lights should be used where necessary.

Sufficient use should be made of windows so that the resources and activity of the library can be seen from the outside, however, care and good judgment should be exercised so that there is not a superfluous use of windows thus depriving the library of usable wall stack space, or giving the library customer a feeling of being in a "gold fish bowl."

In planning the library building some forethought should be given to future possible additions, perhaps a second floor on part of the building.

CHAPTER IV

Site Selection

The selection of a suitable site for a library is perhaps the most important decision in planning a new library building. The public library, like most retail establishments, is dependent for its business on high accessibility. Of course, there are variations in local conditions, and the special conditions of Spencer have been considered in arriving at the following recommendations:

Criteria for Selecting the Site for the Spencer Public Library

1. The more pedestrian traffic the better.
2. Close to the heart of the downtown retail, business, and mercantile center.
3. Of sufficient size so that the major portion or all of the public service area is on the ground floor. The more of the total area of the library on the ground floor the better.
4. As close to good parking as possible.
5. In an area where library employees and users feel free to come and go both at night and during the day.
6. Accessibility to the greatest number of potential users.

Parking.--Many individuals, at first thought, believe that adequate parking is a basic prerequisite for an acceptable main library site. More mature reflection indicates that this is really not the case at all, for while parking is of importance it is not the determining factor in library site selection.

The location of a public library is most comparable to the location problem facing a retail store. The library should be located where the most people are to be found, most often. Frequently this means that parking space may be limited. However, the library should not be expected to solve the downtown parking problem, and when libraries have attempted to do this they have found that the library parking lot is used more often by library non-users. In locating the library then some care must be exercised in regards to parking--are municipal lots available nearby or can they be made available. The greatest danger is that the library in order to solve the parking problem will be located in an area where there is no parking problem and no people.

Combined trips.--The best discussion of the problem of site selection for a public library is found in the brief publication by Joseph Wheeler--The Effective Location of Public Library Buildings. This is

required reading for every library administrator and library board member. (See Bibliography Item 13.)

In Wheeler's study of 200 different library locations he reported on page 3:

. . . Ninety per cent of the librarians polled believe . . . that every new public library . . . should be strategically located in the center of the major pedestrian shopping and office area, where busy stores would flourish.

It has been found that the library user likes to combine a trip to the public library with some other shopping errand, and if this can be solved by parking only once, so much the better.

Park and Civic Center Locations.--Well-meaning but uninformed people are constantly urging parks and civic centers as good sites for a public library building. In most cases a park or civic center site for a library has not proven successful. Civic centers are sometimes crowded with people attending sports events or concerts, but at other times the area is a lonely and quiet place. Sometimes, even in a smaller community, library customers do not like to use a public library located in a park or civic center area during nighttime hours.

Downtown Spencer and the New Library

A great deal has been written about the need of

the public library for a busy downtown location where it will be easily accessible to the greatest number and variety of its potential clientele. The public library needs a central location and the business district profits by having the public library in its midst. In the late afternoon and evening hours the library draws people to the central business district. The library can serve as an information center to the tourist and visitor. As an official department of the city it is open evenings and Saturdays, and the stranger can find information here and a sense of participation in the life of the city.

Recommended sites for the Spencer Public

Library.--A general recommendation regarding a site for the Spencer Public Library in the center of the central retail business district, or as close to the busiest part of the central retail business district. Prime site locations would be Grand from Third to Sixth; on Third, Fourth or Fifth from First Avenue. East to First Avenue. West. (The closer to Grand the better.)

Specifically the property to the North of the present library would give the library a frontage on East Fourth Street, and this site is a better site than the present one. At least Lots 1, 2, and 3 would have to be acquired.

Present site.--Northwest corner of East Third Street and First Avenue East. This is a good site and meets most of the criteria for public library location. It is large enough in size. It is identified by almost fifty years of library use as the public library location, and, of course, any other site would involve additional cost. The writer, in numerous visits to the library always found parking available.

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Spencer Community

A professionally trained librarian, a dedicated staff, a concerned and active library board currently provide Spencer with better than average library service. An analysis of the City of Spencer reveals a sufficient economic base for adequate local support of a superior public library service program. With a high and continuing level of education there will be a definite need and potential use for an expanded and effective public library service program.

Remodel, Addition or New Library Building

The major recommendation of this report is that a new library be constructed on the present library site. Any remodeling of the present sixty-year-old library building would be an uneconomical use of public funds. An addition to the present building is not recommended.

Need for a New Library

Spencer has never spent any money for a public library building. The present library was a gift of

Andrew Carnegie, and this 1904 structure, costing \$10,000 is entirely inadequate for 1964 Spencer. The building is not fireproof. There is insufficient space for the book collection and other library materials, for workroom and office space, for seats for library users. No other like expenditure of public funds would mean as much to so many Spencer citizens as a new public library building.

Recommended Size for New Library

The estimated population served in 1980 is 18,000. The recommended size for the new library is between 12,500 and 13,000 square feet. This would provide three times the space in the old building which has 4,218 square feet, distributed on two floors some of it used up by stairways.

Recommended Site for a New Library

The library should be located as close to or in the heart of the retail business district. The present site is a good one and is recommended for the new building.

An Opportunity for Spencer-- A Regional Library Center

Because of its location and the superior nature of present public library service, Spencer has an

opportunity to develop as a regional public library center. Currently there are four small libraries in the county and there are 7,236 Clay County residents with no public library service.

General Character of the New Library Building

This report does not presume to be a written program for the new Spencer Public Library building. However, general considerations would include the following:

1. The building would have a convenient grade level entrance and all of the public service areas would be on the ground floor.
2. The new library would be a pleasant, handsome building, avoiding the monumental in design and emphasizing the practical and functional daily use of the building.
3. The building would be air-conditioned.

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