

1. Does Cyntreniks own property downtown?

ANSWER: Yes. None of the property owned by Cyntreniks meets the land requirements established for a new central library.

2. The cost of downtown locations will take building dollars and operating monies away for the city wide library system. A 3 mile circle would be half (way) in Mississippi River.

ANSWER: Monies set aside for a new central library are part of the ten-year capital improvements program. A new central library will require building dollars regardless of the location. Furthermore, the overall library system's operating costs are first handled before monies are allocated for building projects.

3. Let private money build downtown. Citizens' tax money (is) for Goodwood where more than (the) majority of people prefer.

ANSWER: Public fund-raising dollars will be required for the new central library regardless of the location. Furthermore, last summer, prior to the October library tax renewal election, the Library Board of Control passed a motion favoring a downtown location for the new central library. Sixty-two (62%) percent of the voters in that election voted "Yes" to the tax renewal.

4. Mention was made of renovating River Center Regional. But no justification for such renovation was given. We know Goodwood needs it.

ANSWER: The Library Board of Control is responsible for addressing the condition of all of its facilities. Each facility warrants the same high building standard regardless of whether it is new or existing. The proposed improvements include better lighting, additional restrooms, roof replacement, exterior repair, additional computer workstations, updated service desks and other needed items. As stated, these improvements are planned if the central library is not built downtown.

5. Have you considered that by railroading an unwanted monumental downtown main library your campaign to raise money will become impossible?

ANSWER: The Library Board of Control has conducted numerous regular and public meetings on the ten-year, capital improvements program including discussions on the new central library. Furthermore, the Library Board passed a motion last summer at a regular meeting, open to the public, stating that it favored a downtown location for the new central library. Key supporters of a public fund-raising campaign on behalf of a new central library are not opposed to the downtown location.

6. The Big Three goals can be accomplished at Independence Park as well as downtown. The Independence site plans included parking lots, not parking garages. This saves capital expenditure.

ANSWER: A parking garage with a minimum of 600 spaces based on 150,000 sq. ft. size will be required for a new central library regardless of the location – Independence Park or downtown. The available land space at Independence Park does not allow for surface parking to accommodate the required parking.

7. Why did the Board hire a firm in existence only one year to do this survey? Are there no more qualified for this job that have a longer track record?

ANSWER: A key criterion in the performance of any study is the qualifications and experience of the specific individuals actually doing the study. You can have a 100-year old firm retained to do the study but the length of tenure of the firm does not alone speak to the experience of the particular individuals conducting the study.

Although Cyntreniks LLC was founded in early 2005, the two principals who personally conducted the study have over fifty (50) years of cumulative experience in areas pertinent to the study. The content and presentation to the Library Board of Control at the public meeting on October 19, 2006 underscored the firm's and the principals' qualifications to do the study.

8. What is the City Council responsibility regarding funding of the downtown (library) ?

ANSWER: The annual budget for the East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control is submitted to the MetroCouncil for its approval. Contracts that meet certain guidelines are also subject to MetroCouncil approval.

9. Consideration of extra traffic on Interstate?

ANSWER: The matter of interstate traffic was not part of the study. Traffic information available from the study was the following:

A Capital Region Planning Commission staff member recently reviewed travel times from each of 384 Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) in EBR Parish to two unique zones – Florida Blvd/I-110 (downtown) and the existing main library on Goodwood Blvd. The average travel time from all 384 TAZs to each of the two proposed new central library sites was determined. The results showed that the downtown site required a travel time weighed by population of 14.1 minutes compared to a travel time weighed by population to the Goodwood Blvd. site of 13.8 minutes.

10. How are the children going to get to the downtown library?

ANSWER: Travel to any library takes various modes: walking, riding bikes, cars, trucks and buses. Children will get to the downtown library utilizing these various modes of travel.

11. The public is being deceived about the location--today's presentation confirmed the only location being considered is downtown. All locations for downtown were labeled CENTRAL; those for Goodwood were labeled REGIONAL.

ANSWER: The Library Board of Control passed a motion last summer in an *open, public meeting* stating that it favored a downtown location for the new central library. The current, ten-year, capital improvements program provides for a new central library located downtown and a renovated regional library at Goodwood.

One aspect of the study focused on determining IF there are available downtown sites for a new central library. This is why the locations for downtown were labeled “central.”

A second aspect of the study focused on the question of whether to “remodel” or “build new” the current Goodwood library as a “regional” library. Therefore, Goodwood is labeled as “regional.”

The report does contain a section where a cost comparison is made between building the new central library downtown versus the Goodwood location. In this comparison, Goodwood is labeled “central library.”

12. The Cyntreniks' \$40,000 (plus \$8,000 in expenses) report covers FOUR structures, including a downtown "destination" library like other cities have. Your time and effort and OUR money would be better spent on building a new main library at the FREE BREC site, then you would only have THREE structures to build. Why do you think Baton Rouge has to be like other cities; why can't Baton Rouge set their own standard and build their main library in a park in the center of EBR????

ANSWER: The two questions in the last sentence are surrounded by several references that need to be laced in context to provide a proper answer to the questions posed.

First, the use and capitalization of the word, free, in the phrase, "FREE BREC site" appears intended to convey the impression that the construction of the new central library at Goodwood Blvd. would be cheaper than constructing a new central library downtown since there would be a land cost involved at the latter site and that the Library Board has whatever land it needs at no cost at Independence Park. Bill Palmer, BREC's Director, has stated his willingness to work with the Library Board of Control in implementing its Capital Improvements Program. However, BREC has its own plan for Independence Park that it is ready to implement. There has been no pledge or commitment from BREC that it will provide whatever land space at Independence Park would be required for the construction of a new central library and parking lot/garage. Any such project would dwarf the current recreational and horticultural uses within the Park and dramatically impact BREC's plans. If one thinks the location issue of a new central library has created two separate groups of proponents, one could also envision an outcry from horticultural and recreational proponents when they are informed that their spaces and usage of the park must now accommodate the construction of a new central library in the park.

* Assuming BREC will provide the Library Board the amount of additional land required at no cost, there is still the issue of parking. Surface parking for 600 cars will require significantly more land than the space required for a parking garage. Again, there is a limit to the land request that the Library Board can demand of BREC.

* Also, success in getting the Federal Transportation Agency (FTA) to provide a multi-million grant to CATS for construction of a parking garage as part of a joint-use venture with the EBRP Library System, greatly depends on the parking garage being part of the overall CATS transit plan. A downtown parking garage fits into the overall CATS transit plan but a parking garage at Goodwood Blvd. does not. Therefore, the potential of CATS as a \$7,000,000 plus revenue source for the new central library project overshadows the \$3-4 million "FREE land" savings gained with a Goodwood Blvd. location.

Therefore, it could be argued that if the concern is the expenditure of "OUR money" tax dollars, and if the downtown library can be constructed at a lesser cost downtown due to the location being able to generate more revenue from non-property tax revenue sources, then the new central library should be built downtown to the benefit of all parish taxpayers. Also, it merits inquiring, "Which

location will generate more fund-raising contribution required to bridge the financial gap that will exist regardless of which site is selected?”

Second, the assumption that the CIP program could be reduced to THREE projects, again, narrowly construes the mission of the Library Board. The Library Board is responsible for addressing the condition of all of its facilities. Each facility warrants the same high building standard regardless of whether it is new or existing. The proposed improvements for the River Center Branch include better lighting, additional restrooms, roof replacement, exterior repair, additional computer workstations, updated service desks and other needed items.

Third, a reference is made to the “center of Baton Rouge” without a proper definition of the word “center”. The geographic center of Baton Rouge? The cultural center of Baton Rouge? The business center of Baton Rouge? The governmental center of Baton Rouge? The population center of Baton Rouge? The developing center of Baton Rouge? The visitors/tourists center of Baton Rouge? The center of Baton Rouge where a new central library could best serve the population group most in need of its services? Or, is it the center of Baton Rouge to a small group of location proponents?

Now, allow me to address the two questions in the last sentence. A thorough review of the objective and professional reasoning why cities across the country are building new central libraries downtown may logically allow an objective person to favor emulating their action instead of being a lone ranger for the sake of being different. The Library Board is fulfilling its responsibilities by reviewing and considering the reasoning of other cities nationwide to determine if any of these considerations are applicable here. If it does elect to build the new central downtown, it will be based on an objective consideration of ALL the factors rather than basing a decision on circumspect arguments waged by a vocal group.

In closing, recently, the most vocal group supporting the Goodwood Blvd. location distributed a document outlining its reasons. Kathleen Callaghan, an extremely knowledgeable, objective parish resident with impressive credentials, gave a thought-provoking rebuttal to each of the reasons outlined that the group .What was equally impressive to note is that Ms. Callaghan chose her words very carefully with a purpose aimed not to provoke the reader to a flawed conclusion but to open the reader’s mind to the facts.