

# City of Lincoln, Placer County, CA

## Joint facilities planning, development, construction and use.

By Francesca Wright

*As one of the fastest growing communities in the State of California for the past several years, the City of Lincoln was faced with the challenge of growing its public buildings and recreational facilities fast enough to keep pace with the needs of the community. The city had grown from a population of 7,800 in 1990 to 32,000 in 2005. With that growth came packed school rooms throughout the Western Placer Unified School District (WPUSD), need for safe bicycle and pedestrian routes to school, and a lack of recreational opportunities for youth and adults alike.*

### The Needs

#### Library Expansion

Despite the tripling of its population, Lincoln residents have found themselves being served by one Carnegie library located in the downtown are, falling way short of the two books per capita which is considered “adequate” to serve a population the size of Lincoln.

#### Administrative Office Space

With all this growth came the need to expand staffing. Existing city and school district office space was insufficient.

#### Housing

More affordable housing was needed within the community so that these new public servants had the opportunity to live in the same community in which they work.

### Beginnings

These needs and too few financial resources prompted the development of the Lincoln/WPUSD Collaborative Program in March of 2003. The goal was to meet the growing demands of the community by pooling scarce financial resources to build and share several necessary public facilities.

### The Projects

A joint planning group was formed to discuss and hammer out the details of several joint public projects:

1. **Joint Use Public Library** that included not only the city and school district, but also the local community college, Sierra College. Once the details of the [joint-use agreement](#) had been ironed out, the City/College/School District jointly applied for and received a \$10.4 million grant from the California Public Library Construction and Renovation Board to help build the \$16 million new library.

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2. **Safe Routes to School.** The City and District jointly applied to Caltrans for a [grant](#) to improve the infrastructure in and around the current schools located within the district. Working closely with school officials, City staff developed the grant application and received a Safe Route to School Grant for \$341,000 for much needed sidewalk and safety improvements. This local assistance grant was established in 1999 and is scheduled to sunset in January, 2008.
  3. **New Facilities Use Agreement.** The City and District entered into a [memorandum of agreement](#) regarding the sharing of all new school buildings and adjoining recreational areas. The School district will pay for the construction of all new school buildings and the city will pay for the construction of all adjoining recreational areas at the new school sites.
  4. **City/School District Administrative Building.** The city and district have entered into a joint use agreement to develop a four story shared administrative building. The agreement outlines details on the construction of the building, the use of the building, sharing project costs, ownership of the building and sharing operation and maintenance coats.
  5. **Zebra Housing Project.** Community Development Block Grant funds will be used for the construction of single family residences to be built by students from Lincoln High School. The completed 3 and 4 bedroom units, approximately 1,400 square feet each, will be sold to those meeting the eligibility requirements of the CDBG program for target income. Units will be offered to school district employees first and then to City of Lincoln employees. If there are no interested parties, the homes are then placed on the open market for anyone meeting the income requirements. The project will produce one to two houses per year.

### **Accomplishments & Savings**

- ✓ Library will result in a 67% reduction in administrative overhead for the City, a 30% reduction in overhead costs, and a 50% increase in library hours of operation. The new library will have the capacity to carry 150,000 titles. It will provide expanded service including reference desk, group study rooms, tutoring rooms, media viewing and listening stations, media screening, a young adult area, a homework center and a computer lab.
- ✓ Sidewalk and roadway improvements financed by joint grant from CalTrans.
- ✓ Twelve Bridges Elementary School has been completed under the MOU and there are plans for three more resulting in a 20% savings in land costs for schools and parks and a 30% increase in utilization of school buildings and park playfields.
- ✓ The joint administration building will provide citizen access to public service in a central location. Both City and School District will realize a 20% savings in square footage costs and 20% savings in building operation and maintenance costs.
- ✓ Zebra Housing provided students with hands-on skills development and will increase the supply of affordable housing.

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## Challenges & Lessons Learned

### Invest Staff Time

Ironing out the details of a joint use agreement is not simple. The library project involved three partners, each with separate land acquisition, building standards, staffing requirements, and maintenance policies.

### Safe Routes to School is Multifaceted

Retrofitting sidewalks and paths into a built environment has its design challenges. Getting families to allow their children to use the finished bicycle and pedestrian paths is another issue. Lincoln is now working with the PTA, hosting “walk to school days” and “walking school busses” to help overcome parental safety concerns.

### Coordinate Building Standards

Schools often employ “Design-Build” contracting. This approach qualifies a designer builder who guarantees the construction of a facility by a given point in time at an agreed price. The designer/builder does not provide blueprints prior to contract. Monitoring for adherence to city codes requires greater planning, onsite inspection, and coordination.

### Leadership Matters

A committed City Manager and Superintendent of Schools can overcome staff skepticism and resistance. School Principal buy-in is essential for ease of day-to-day sharing of fields and facilities.

### Contact

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### Sources

American Library Association. “Joint- Use Libraries: A Bibliography”, ALA Library Fact Sheet Number 20. Downloaded from [www.ala.org/](http://www.ala.org/)

City of Lincoln, Western Placer Unified School District and Sierra Joint Community College District. “Joint Use Cooperative Agreement for the Lincoln Public Library at Twelve Bridges.” Downloaded from [www.ci.lincoln.ca.us/pagedownloads/12%20Bridges%20Joint%20Use%20Library.pdf](http://www.ci.lincoln.ca.us/pagedownloads/12%20Bridges%20Joint%20Use%20Library.pdf)

Department of Transportation, “Safe Routes to School”, [www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoute2.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoute2.htm)

Department of Transportation, “Local Assistance Interim Application Guidelines, Chapter 24, Safe Routes to School. March, 2005. [www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/SafeRTS2School/Guidelines6thCycle.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/SafeRTS2School/Guidelines6thCycle.pdf)

Jerry Johnson, City Manager, City of Lincoln. Interview, March 1, 2006