

BEMIDJI CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Agenda

Monday, March 12, 2012

**City Hall
Council Chambers
5:30 P.M.**



1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

2. UPSTREAM TV PRESENTATION REGARDING REUSE OF THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY

3. COUNCIL UPDATES/QUESTIONS
(Council can use this opportunity to ask questions or get updates on current projects from the City Manager or other City staff that are available at the work session. Discussion only—no action is taken.)

4. ADJOURNMENT

UPSTREAM TELEVISION

CARNEGIE LIBRARY PROPOSAL



The following pages are intended for the Bemidji City Council and propose an appropriate use for the Bemidji Carnegie Library. This Document was issued on March 1st, 2012.

Proposal for the Carnegie Building

Upstream TV, channel 18, would like to thank you for the generous consideration of our proposal. To keep up with the ever-developing media needs and endeavors of the diverse community members, Upstream TV would like to extend a collaborative hand to the City of Bemidji by offering partnership in projects. This partnership would provide a camera/editing person for the City events and public service messages as well as air the events on Upstream TV and the Government channel.

The Upstream board and members acknowledge the importance of the Carnegie Building to the community as a longstanding home for multiple artistic mediums. The Carnegie Building was initially built with the purpose of dissemination of information; Upstream TV proposes to return to the initial use and intent of the building by unifying information and technology.

Media is a part of all life: government, personal, and educational.

This is the foundation of Upstream TV; to share our community, to bridge understanding, to give people a glimpse of how exciting, interesting and welcoming Bemidji truly is. We find this will help stimulate our local economy in the way of tourism.

The benefits to the City of Bemidji would be the partnership of Channel 2 and Channel 18, as well as the relationship of the Carnegie Library to Library Park. Upstream TV could overwhelmingly expand the operations of Channel 2. Upstream TV can video graph and televise any meeting, increasing its meaning and informative spectrum, allowing everyone to know and understand what is happening in their city. Upstream TV

could archive all city council meetings, making them readily accessible on the internet, as well as Channel 2.

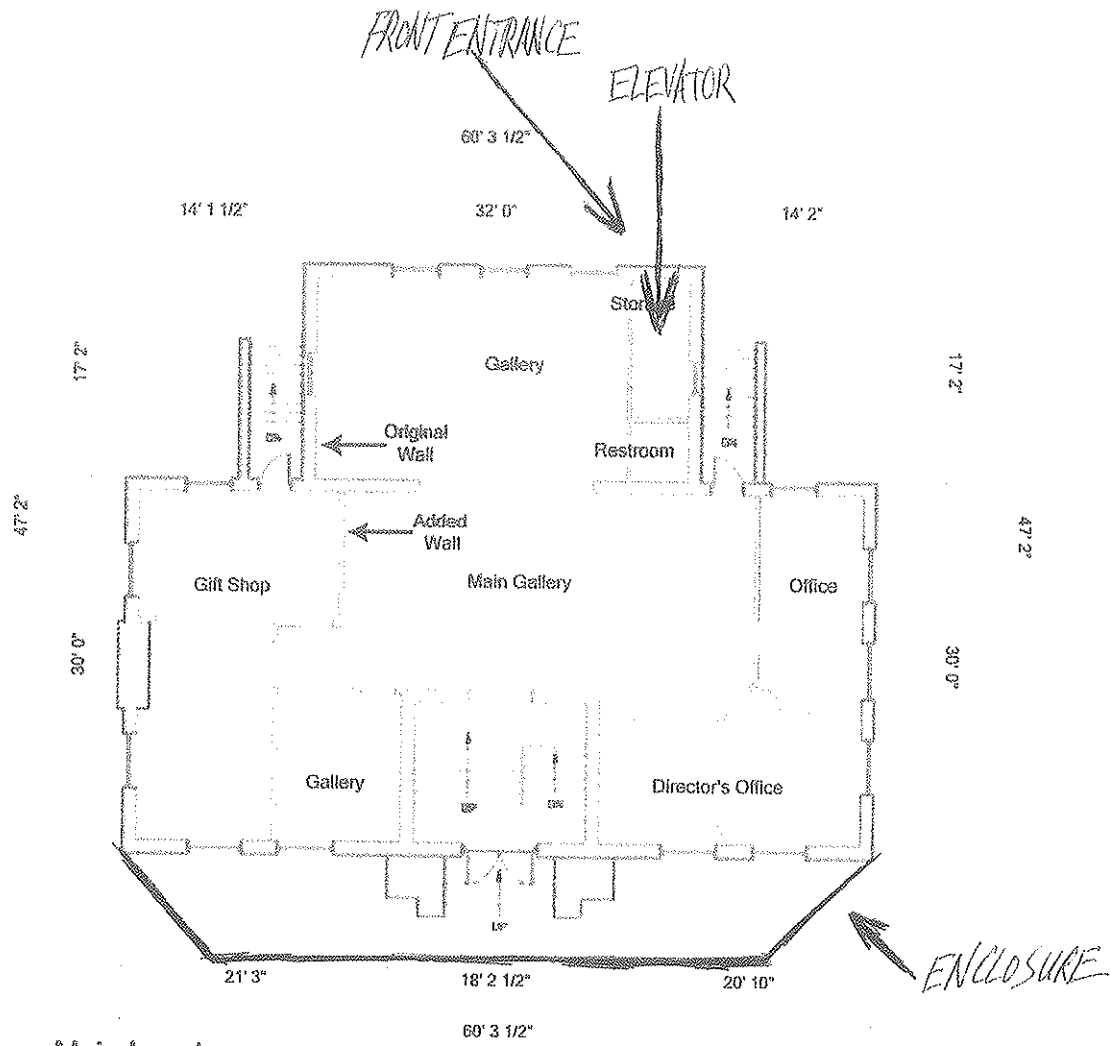
The Archive would be without limit. Technicians are poised at the ready, to sanctify every last story. We purpose ourselves with the digital archive of the City of Bemidji.

Upstream funds would maintain the building. Upstream would provide public bathroom accessibility for people who use the park and lakefront.

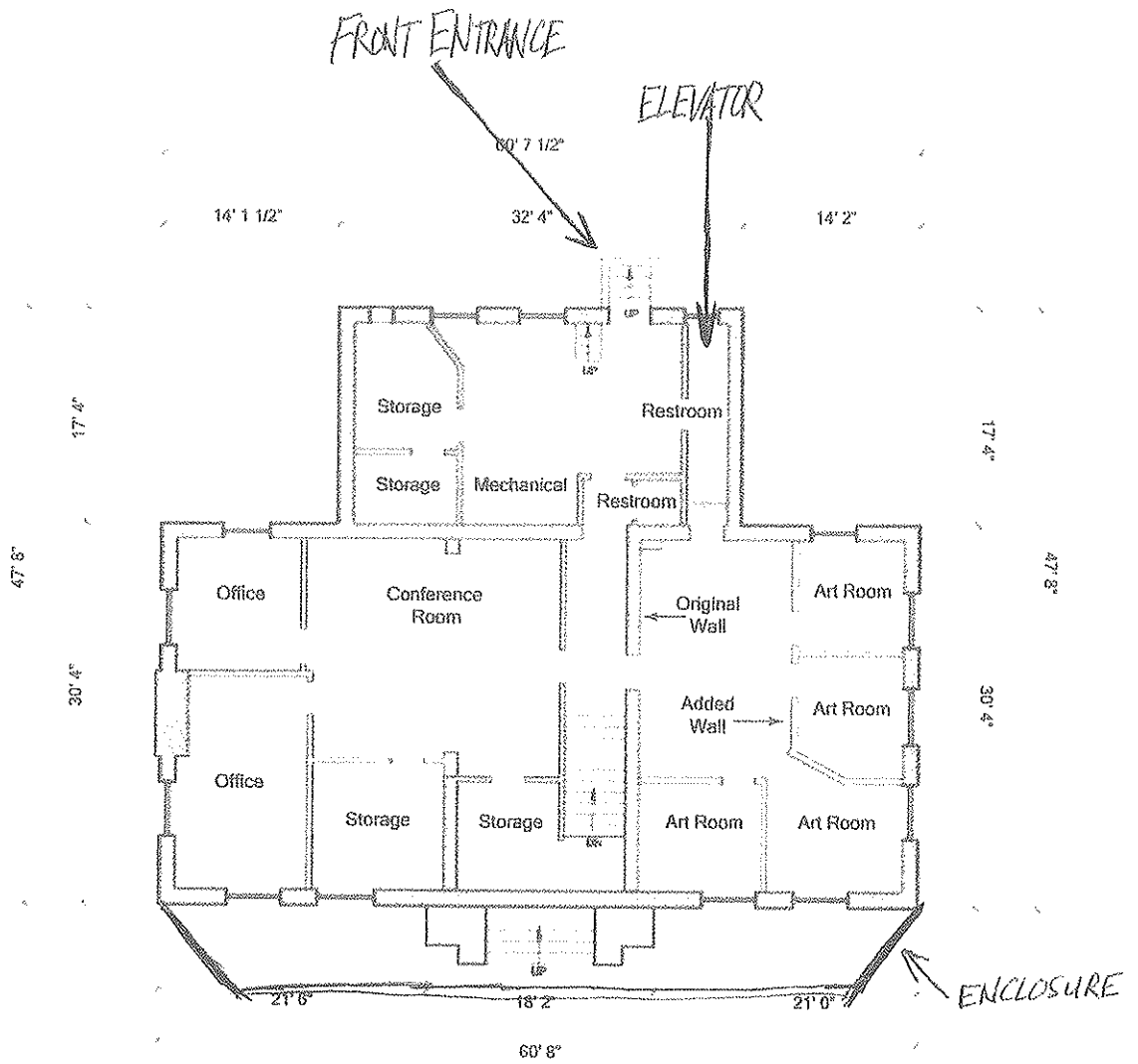
Upstream would be willing to operate all electric, sound, projection, and transmissions of a proposed grandstand and extend itself to any movie in the park or other waterfront entertainment.

A warming area, which UTV intends on building for the community, would add safety and comfort to the citizens that travel to our shores.

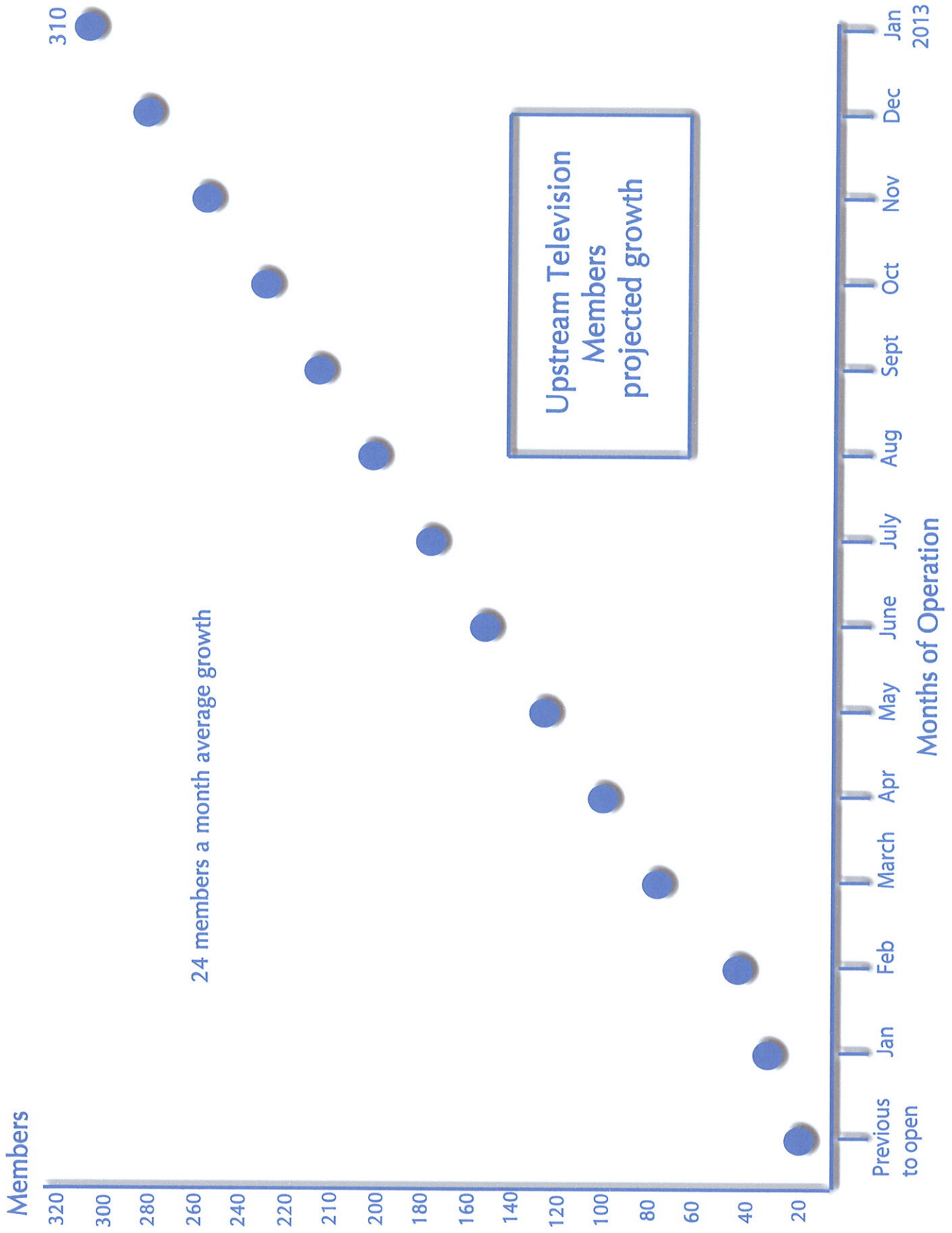
The unrealized potential of the internet and cable communications systems stand steadfast, ready to be utilized as the ultimate tool of inclusion. Not just community members, but every hotel room occupant. A reason to leave your room and join us, down at the waterfront.

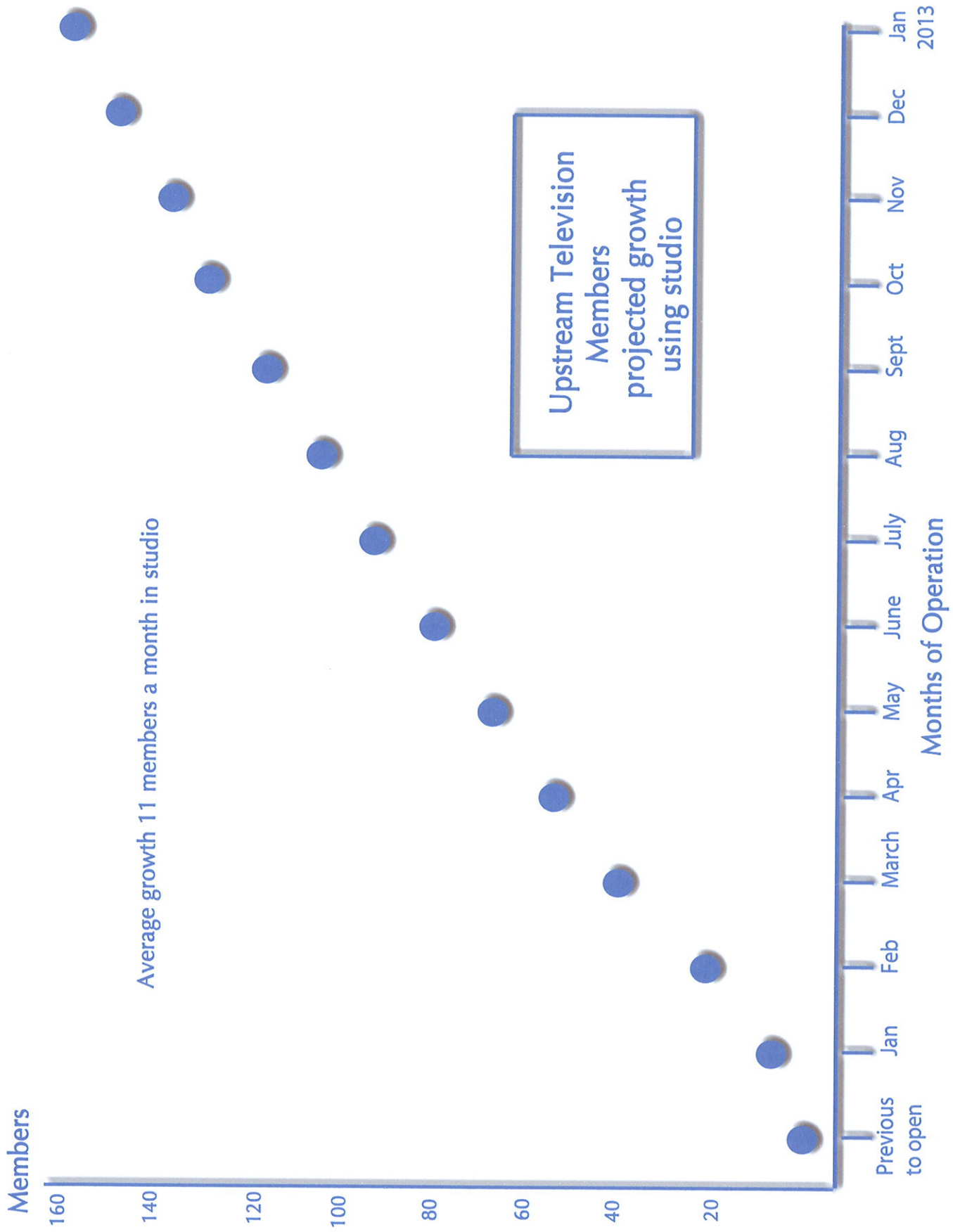


Main Level



Lower Level





- The opportunity to preserve a historical building by utilizing technology
- Gain handicap accessibility
- The location would give Upstream more visibility
- Provide video service for lakefront events
- Upstream TV would maintain the building
- Provide bathrooms and a warming area for those who use the park and lakefront
- Expand Government Access Television
- UTV will continuously seek funding as a 501C3 – non profit.

1. Intent of this Work

- The Bemidji Carnegie Library is currently slated to be demolished. The decision was taken by the City Council after considering a wide range of factors.
- This work is a study on the specific topic of the availability of funding that could be obtained to restore/preserve the building.
- The potential for funding was described in a meeting of the City council as probably small in quantity with the availability of funds described as highly uncertain. However, another look at the funding potential indicates that the situation may be much more favorable.
- Although it is recognized that this is only one factor in the complicated equation of what to do with the Library building, it surely is a major factor. This paper will put forward an accurate depiction of the facts around the availability of funding for a restoration/preservation project.

2. Cost Estimate

- Cost estimate: The most feasible case for a refurbishment of the building for reuse is probably the Case 3A, from the 2009 “Reuse Study for the Bemidji Carnegie Library”: “Stabilize and address accessibility”, with the cost estimate:
 - Planning cost = \$125,000
 - Development cost = \$790,000
 - Estimated total restoration cost = \$915,000
- Note that the Reuse Study also projects the cost for demolition of the building at \$560,000, an amount believed by city staff to be a big overestimation, which could lead to the presumption that other cost estimates in this study are inflated.
- The Council has used an estimate of the cost of a restoration project of around \$1,000,000, which until better information is developed is a good working number.

3. Grant Monies are Available to Preserve the Library Building

- In numerous discussions with the MN Preservation Alliance and the MN State Historical Society we have been consistently advised that funding for a Library preservation/reuse project would be available. Information from these conversations:
 - Obtaining grant money involves a competitive process and hence an uncertain outcome.
 - **But we have a good project that would receive serious consideration.**
 - **There is a good prospect that money would be granted for this project.**
 - **The funding that could be obtained via the grant process could be quite large and a significant percentage, perhaps approaching the total cost of the project.**
- Contact persons:
 - Erin Hanafin Berg, Preservation Alliance of MN.
 - John Fulton and Michael Koop, State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO)
- Letters of support can be made available if requested.

- Grant money is available from a number of sources.
 - Grant applications can be made to more than one organization.
 - **The most attractive option for the City is to secure “Legacy Funds” for a restoration project.**
 - Legacy grant funds encourage local match money, but this is not required.
 - However, the amount of matching funds does influence the competitiveness of the application, and is viewed as an indicator of the community commitment to the project.
 - “Soft donations”, for example the value of volunteer time, can be put forward as local matching funds.
 - Note that using a Legacy Fund grant for a Library restoration project would **NOT interfere with also using Legacy Fund grant money for the Lakeshore Park Project.** The two (potential) grants come from separate sources/funds within SHPO and would not “compete”.
 - Around \$11 million is available to SHPO for “Cultural Heritage Grants” over 2012-2013.
 - Of particular interest as a source of funding is the “Jeffris foundation”. We have been advised that our project is a “good match” with the objectives of this fund which is historic preservation throughout the upper mid-west, particularly in smaller communities.
 - Some fundraising success would be required before we could apply to this foundation, which requires a 50% match of funds.

4. Legacy Grants - Requirements

- The priorities of the Legacy Grants program match the needs of the Bemidji building:
 - ADA accessibility
 - Critical infrastructure (including HVAC, electrical upgrades)
 - Exterior stabilization (including windows)
- The Eligibility Requirements are met: The building is on the National Historic register and is owned by a government entity.
 - Should the building be moved it would no longer qualify (due to loss of National Register status).
- The building must have a “public use”. **The City would have to want to re-use the building and have a use to propose.**
 - Uses associated with the park, for an art gallery and for a public/governmental TV facility have been mentioned.
 - Preferably the proposed use would be one that would support ongoing building maintenance.

5. Legacy Grants - Considerations

- **Using Legacy grant money requires a multiple year commitment to a restoration project.**
- It is highly unlikely that money for the total restoration/preservation project would be available in one go. This is a fact of relying on State money.
- Complete restoration/preservation would need to be structured as a “phased project”; presented in stages, over time, in grant applications that would be funded one by one.
- It is very possible to receive large amounts of funding for this project, but the money would be received over time. (Perhaps the restoration of the Bemidji Train Station is an example)
 - The building has issues but is not “falling down”, allowing for a staged renovation.
- Grant money can be used to pay for planning and management, such as hiring a consultant to describe the needs of the building, and for Design and Engineering Services. Separate funding could be used to hire construction management. This is in addition to obtaining funding for “bricks and mortar”.
- Using Legacy Grant monies would require that the project:
 - Follow “Historical guidelines” via oversight by the State Historical society, which, for example, could preclude major changes to the interior of the building.
 - Use “Minnesota prevailing wage rates” which would be expected to add around 10% to the cost of the project compared to funding via other sources.

6. Other Funding Sources

- It is very likely that funds could also be obtained through sources such as:
 - Foundations and Corporate sponsors
 - Individual donors via major gifts
 - Online fundraising through social media
 - Direct appeals to the community
- **The experience of Thief River Falls**
 - The City of Thief River Falls initially set out to use Legacy Funding to preserve their Historic Carnegie Library as a Convention/Visitors’ center.
 - They actually raised **\$1.2 million, the entire cost of the project, through contributions from individual donors and a variety of direct fundraising initiatives.** Hence, restoration of the building cost the city nothing, and they were able to renovate the building without Historical Society restrictions.
 - The City website that collected donations is very pertinent and interesting: <http://thiefriver.revtrak.net/tek9.asp?pg=products&specific=jnlqcoe0>
 - Contact: Jodie Torkelson, City Administrator, Thief River Falls

7. Sample Outline of a Path Forward to Fund and Launch a Restoration Project

This is an aggressive timeline to be able to apply for Legacy Funds on the June 1 deadline.

- **April 2**
 - Decide projected re-use for the building sufficient that a description can be used for a concept-based examination of the building.
 - Identify and contact two Architect firms to conduct a rapid Condition Assessment of the building.
 - We are urged to employ a firm specializing in Historic Preservation projects.
 - Michael Burns Ltd from Moorhead/Fargo MN were selected as Architect by Thief River Falls and are an example of a firm with extensive experienced in Historical Preservation. <http://mjbald.com>
- **April 9**
 - Obtain approval of a project scope document, outlining the parameters for the Condition Assessment and the project. Forward this document to the Architect firms.
 - Receive and review suggested contracts for a Condition Assessment from the firms.
- **April 16 -20**
 - Review projected work and bids and discuss with the Architects.
 - This assessment needs to re-evaluate the condition of the building, the mechanical and electrical systems, etc. considering the intended use and the potential to stage the needed work.
 - Potential restoration must be itemized and costs estimated, including fees, expenses and potential soft costs.
 - Final design concepts should be in the deliverables.
- **April 20**
 - First funding threshold: ~ \$10,000 to contract an Architect to conduct the Condition Assessment.
- **April 23**
 - Project leader attends the Historical Society training session on Fundraising planning and Grants proposal preparation - held in Walker.
 - Completion of this course will provide up-to-date information on interfacing with the Legacy (and other) Grant programs.
 - Completion of the course will assist in tie-breaker decisions between similar requests for Historical and Cultural Grants.

Bemidji Carnegie Library – Study of the Availability of Funding for a Preservation Project

- **April/May**
 - Identify foundations, corporations, individual donors, and other potential contributors of major gifts – to secure commitments of donations that can be put forward as “matching funds” for grant applications.
 - Connect with the members of the “Save the Library” discussion group on Facebook to see if fundraising can be organized through their activities.
- **May 1**
 - Complete the first draft of an application for Legacy Grant Funding based on the information available to date.
- **May 7**
 - Receive and review the initial results of the Condition Assessment.
 - Identify funds or volunteers to produce any additional engineering drawings to be included in the June 1 application submission.
- **May 15**
 - Receive final results of the Condition Assessment
- **May 28**
 - Review the final draft of the Legacy Fund application.
- **June 1**
 - Legacy Fund application deadline.
 - This is a “pre-application” in that the submissions are read for the purpose of giving feedback/advice.
 - The application needs to describe the total project phases envisioned but is focused on obtaining funding only for the first phase of work.
 - Based upon the response to fundraising activities, this application could include the request for money for architectural and or further project definition.
- **July 1**
 - Submit final Legacy Grant application
- **July 15**
 - Based upon the success of fundraising, review the value of submitting additional applications for grants that require matching funds. Of specific interest would be the Jeffris foundation, as mentioned above. Develop a plan for these grant applications, as appropriate.
- **August**
 - Develop project staffing plans – architect, construction management, etc. and identify candidate lists. Write contract parameters.
- **September**
 - Monitor the application review process at the Historical Society
- **October**
 - Legacy Grant funding awarded.

Bemidji Carnegie Library – Study of the Availability of Funding for a Preservation Project

- **Outcome 1** – it is expected that by this point, money is available to initiate the project, which would proceed through:
 - Finalizing detailed design
 - Contracting Construction Management
 - Entertaining bids
 - Etc.
- **Outcome 2** – Faced with a manageable funding gap, a plan could be implemented to launch a broader community fundraising effort to bridge the gap. Faced with an unmanageable funding gap, the City could now elect to demolish the building.
- The actual project timetable depends upon the success of fundraising

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March 9, 2012