



St. Albert Public Library

Request for Proposal

Needs Assessment Study, including Community Survey

Date Issued: February 2, 2009

Due Date: 12:00 noon, March 9, 2009

Contact Information: Peter Bailey

Public Services Manager

St. Albert Public Library

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Part 1 – General Information

I. Introduction

The St. Albert Public Library has begun a process to create a Library Services Master Plan for St. Albert. This master plan will serve as a foundation document underpinning the future path of the library services in St. Albert both in the short and long term (the next 25 years).

To support this undertaking, we require the services of a consultant to conduct a Needs Assessment Study, the core of which will be a **community survey**. Since the last needs assessment in 1992, the city of St. Albert has grown and changed – as has the St. Albert Public Library. A study is required to assess how well the Library is meeting the needs of its evolving community, as well as to provide strategic directions for the Library into the future.

II. Objectives

The primary objective of the Needs Assessment study is to determine the needs of the citizens of St. Albert as to library services, both now and in the longer term. Areas of focus include:

- Facilities • Collections • Services • Programs

However, given that the Library's existing facility in St. Albert Place exceeded capacity in 1999, a particular focus must be on facilities, for restrictive limits are placed on all existing and proposed activities with a facility that cannot be expanded.

III. Background

In 2008 the Library celebrated 25 years of service in the iconic St. Albert Place building on the banks of the Sturgeon River in downtown St. Albert. The approximately 25,000 square foot facility on two floors has served the Library and the community admirably over the years, but by 1999 the facility had passed design capacity (50,000 population and 100,000 item collection). The Library is known for its innovative approach, early adopters of technologies such as patron self-check machines and services such as Bestseller Express.

The Library is one of the most well-used and well-loved of city services, always ranking well in City of St. Albert satisfaction surveys. The 2008 City Community Survey found that citizens consider the Library one of the key strengths of the City, rated as of higher than average importance and higher than average satisfaction. The Library was tied with emergency medical and fire services at 89% satisfaction.

Satisfaction with Library services is also reflected in Library use. The 2007 *Canadian Urban Libraries Council* statistics show that St. Albert Public Library was the 2nd busiest medium-sized library (serving populations between 50 and 100,000) in Canada.

Some key facts from 2007 and 2008:

Use:

- 24,358 people were members of the Library
- 263,030 people visited the Library in person
- 744,475 books, DVDs, CDs and other materials were loaned to members
- 78,499 items were used in-house
- Almost 28,000 people enjoyed almost 500 programs
- Over 40,000 reference questions were answered by our staff
- Over 67,000 special requests (holds) were filled on books and other materials.
- Over 200,000 virtual visits were made to the Library via the Internet.

Collections and Services

- Over 22,000 items (books, DVDs, CDs, etc) were added to the collection
- Library held 160,958 items at the end of 2007.
- Library subscribed to 343 periodicals
- 39 computer workstations were available for public use (Internet, office software, etc)

Finances

Municipal funding	\$2,243,300	78.0%
Provincial funding	\$281,395	9.8%
Library-generated	\$274,064	9.5%
Donations, other funds	\$76,886	2.7%
TOTAL FUNDING	\$2,875,645	100.0%

Staff and Volunteers 2008

- Staff: 30.3 FTE / 50 staff (full time, part time)
- Community members volunteered over 4,000 hours to the Library in 2008.

IV. Scope of Work

The Needs Assessment study will determine the needs of the citizens of St. Albert as to library services, both now and in the longer term. Areas of focus include:

- Collections • Services • Programs • Facilities

As noted above, a particular focus will be on facilities.

A. Responsibilities

The Needs Assessment study is a project approved by The St. Albert Library Board, which governs St. Albert Public Library. The Board has final approval of any reports issued. The study will be overseen by a Steering Committee, composed of a member of the Board, the Library Director, the Public Services Manager and the Library Communications Coordinator.

The day-to-day work of the study will be the responsibility of the Project Team, composed of the Library Director, the Public Services Manager and the Library Communications Coordinator. The consultant will work mainly with the Project Manager, Public Services Manager Peter Bailey.

B. Process

The study consists of two components, **Information Gathering** and **Public Consultation**. Information Gathering will require some knowledge of libraries; however the Project Team will work extensively in cooperation with the consultant to complete this component.

The key component is Public Consultation. This component will require professional market research professionals with expertise and knowledge in opinion research, particularly for the community survey and focus groups.

1. Information Gathering

i. Internal Research and Review

Meet with Project Team and senior staff to confirm information and direction, process, timelines, activities, goals, responsibilities, deliverables, etc.

Review reports and studies produced by the Library or relating to the Library from past years:

- Facility/Space needs documents:
 - *Library Programming and Feasibility Study* (Manasc Isaac, 2002)
 - Identified the need for 53,000 ft² of space for the Library.
 - *City St. Albert Place Civic Space Strategy* (McCready, 2007)
 - Proposed a second location as solution to Library space needs.
 - *St. Albert Public Library Site Selection Study* (Manasc Isaac, 2008)
 - Identified three possible locations for a 25,000 ft² branch library.
 - *Growing into the Future: Library Branch Business Cases 2009-2012* (Library, 2008). - Library case for capital funding for a second location, including “The Next Chapter: Vision of a New Library for St. Albert”.
- Other documents include the last community needs survey results from 1992, annual surveys of Library users and reports such as annual library reports.

ii. External Research and Review

- Demographics – Analysis of current, past and projected population and other demographic figures, from Census and other reports. Who does SAPL serve now and who will it serve in years to come?
- Library trends – How is the role of public libraries changing? Where are libraries headed in the future?

- Societal and local trends – What is happening locally and further afield that is changing the role of the Library?

iii. **Benchmarking**

- Peer comparison – How does SAPL compare with similar libraries in similar communities? What are the best practices of peer libraries?
- Standards – How does SAPL stand in relation to established standards? Evolving standards for building area per capita is a crucial element for SAPL.
- Facility models – What successful solutions have other similar communities used when the library facility has reached capacity?

2. **Public Consultation**

i. **Community Survey**

► **Survey Design**

- Design the survey in collaboration with the Project Team, to the satisfaction of the Library. Senior staff and the Library Board will provide input into the development of the survey questions.
- We seek your advice on survey design, length, sample size and selection, margin of error, execution, data processing, analytical process and report preparation.
- Select a random sample of residents of St. Albert. The sample must produce statistically valid findings. Similar surveys have used a margin of error no greater than four percent.

► **Survey Execution**

- Conduct the survey in April-May 2009.
- Execute the fieldwork of the survey, including data processing and analysis. The primary survey method would be by telephone, but online and in-person components would be useful additions.

- ### ii. **Focus Group Forums** – The survey tells the “what” about community needs, but group discussions can get at the “why”. The consultant would develop the discussion points in collaboration with the Project Team, using information gathered from the survey as a guide. The Consultant would conduct the discussions in collaboration with the Project Team.

Up to 10 forums would be held, with each having a particular participant focus. Special groups with particular expertise and knowledge, requiring their own forums would include:

- Library board members, plus former board members
- Library staff
- City leaders, including current and former City Councillors
- Business leaders
- Community leaders, including education and non-profit organizations

Other forums would focus on particular demographic groups, particularly age groups. These forums would include a mix of Library users and nonusers. The makeup of these forums would rely on the expertise of the consultant. Forum groups might include:

- Children
- Teens (age 13 – 17)
- Younger adults (18 – 25 & 26 – 35)
- Mature adults (36 – 55)
- Older adults (56 - 65) & Seniors (Over 65)

- iii. **Stakeholder Interviews** – Up to 10 interviews would be held to determine the views of prominent opinion leaders in the community, including, possibly, members of the education, business, cultural, heritage and aboriginal communities.

C. Reports

i. Draft Report

- Present key findings and highlights to the Project Team and senior staff.
- Prepare a draft report outlining findings of the Information Gathering and Public Consultation components, including recommendations for resolving gaps between assessed needs and the Library today.
- Distribute draft report to Steering Committee and senior staff.

ii. Final Report

- Incorporate comments and suggestions from distribution of draft report in creating final report.
- Present final report to the Library Board in July 2009.
- Ensure all reports and data are the property of the Library, with the numerical data from the survey in a usable format.

V. Timelines

The deadline for proposal submission is noon on March 9, 2009.

The Board will accept proposals by mail or hand delivery. The Steering Committee will review all proposals and award the contract by March 19, 2009.

Dates for the survey, forums, Board involvement, and any other interactions will be established at mutually convenient times for both parties.

The approximate timelines for this project are as follows:

Task	Timeline	Action/Responsibility
RFP issued	February 2, 2009	Project Manager (PM)
RFP submission deadline	March 9, 2009	Project Team (PT)
RFP preliminary evaluation	March 12, 2009	Steering Committee (SC)
Shortlist presentations (if needed)	March 14, 2009	Steering Committee (SC)
Award of Contract	March 19, 2009	Steering Committee (SC)
Information gathering	Mar/Apr, 2009	Consultant/PM
Survey instrument created	by April 13, 2009	Consultant/PT
Survey completed	by May 10, 2009	Consultant/PT
Focus group forums	May, 2009	Consultant/PT
Stakeholder interviews	May, 2009	Consultant/PT
Draft report	June 15, 2009	Consultant/SC
Final report	July 6, 2009	Consultant/SC

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Part 2 – Terms and Conditions, Standard

The following Terms and Conditions are standard and are included in most City of St. Albert tender/proposal packages. Should discrepancies or differences be noted between the terms and conditions stated here and those stated elsewhere in the bid documentation provided, then the terms and conditions stated elsewhere in the documentation will prevail.

I. General

1. All prices quoted will be in Canadian dollars. Price adjustments due to currency fluctuations, or any other reason, will not be accepted.
2. Prices quoted will be firm and unchangeable after the time and date of bid closure. Pricing will be guaranteed for a period of at least 90 days.
3. All prices quoted shall be exclusive of the Goods and Services Tax. The successful vendor will be required to show the G.S.T. separately on their invoices. All other taxes will be included in the bid price.
4. The Library accounts are Net 30 Day accounts and all bids will be tendered as such. Bids requiring payment in less than 30 days will be rejected, however, early payment discounts will be considered.
5. Unless directed otherwise, all prices quoted will be inclusive of all freight and delivery charges. Delivery shall be F.O.B. the St. Albert Public Library.
6. There is no expressed or implied obligation for the St. Albert Public Library to reimburse responding vendors for any expenses incurred in the preparation of bids or attendance at interviews/presentations in response to this Request for Proposal.

II. Acceptance of Submissions

1. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, submission of a quotation indicates acceptance by the vendor of the terms and conditions contained in the Request for Proposal.
2. The St. Albert Public Library reserves the right to withdraw, at their discretion and at any time, this Request for Proposal. The St. Albert Public Library will not be held liable for any expenses, costs, loss or damage incurred or suffered by any Proponent as a result of such withdrawal.
3. The St. Albert Public Library reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all proposals.

III. Accuracy, Confidentiality and Release of Information

1. All information contained in this document with respect to operations, qualities, quantities, values, description of properties, losses, etc., are reasonably and realistically accurate to the best of the Library's knowledge, however, are not guaranteed by the Library. It is each vendor's responsibility to obtain and verify to the best of their ability the information required to respond accurately to this RFP.
2. All proposals submitted to the Library become the property of the Library in their entirety. Quotations and the information contained within will be held in confidence as much as is reasonably possible and subject to the disclosure provisions contained in the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, RSA 2000, c.F-25 ("The F.O.I.P. Act")
3. Any information or knowledge gained or obtained by the vendors as a result of this process will be maintained in confidentiality and will not be sold, distributed or in any way used for profit.
4. Due to the nature of this Request for Proposal, details contained within each submission may not be provided or available to vendors prior to award of contract. Release of information will be governed by the provisions contained in the F.O.I.P. Act.

IV. Contract

1. To a reasonable degree, the Library reserves the right to negotiate the final contract with the successful vendor outside of the defined scope of services indicated in the RFP.
2. At any time and at the sole discretion of the Library, the Library reserves the right to terminate any and/or all services provided by the successful vendor should the services provided be deemed to be unsatisfactory. In this event, the Library will provide written notice to the vendor of the unsatisfactory condition and if the vendor does not remedy the unsatisfactory condition within 30 days of the date of written notice the Library will terminate the service(s) on 30 days written notice.
3. Vendor may provide a copy of their standard contract for this type of project if they wish.

V. Conflict of Interest

1. All vendors are required to disclose to the Library any direct or potential conflict of interest in their RFP submission. The disclosure will detail the nature and degree of the direct or potential conflict. The Municipalities reserve the right to reject a proposal and/or to cancel the award of contract if, in their sole opinion, any interest disclosed from any source could give the appearance of a conflict of interest or cause speculation as to the objectivity of the awarding of the contract.

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Part 3 – Instructions to Bidders

I. Proposal Format and Submissions

1. Your firm's proposal will address the following points.
 - i) A general description of your firm's experience, expertise.
 - ii) An indication of your experience with studies for an organization of this nature
 - iii) An overview of your approach (specific steps and activities) to this work and how you would work with Library staff
 - iv) An indication of the survey size and type of sample that will be obtained. Indicate number of participants as well as the preferred method(s) of obtaining the information
 - v) The names and resumes of the staff who would work on this assignment
 - vi) References for your firm overall and the staff assigned to this project
 - vii) An explanation of your fees and deliverables as well as an estimate of the number of hours you anticipate working on this project and an indication of your firm's availability
2. Proposals should include the following documents:
 - i) Signed cover letter indicating a formal response to our Request for Proposal and a confirmation that your firm possesses a satisfactory knowledge of the requirements of this project and are familiar with and in agreement with the scope of the project.
 - ii) main proposal
3. Five (5) print copies of your RFP response are required, as well as an electronic copy (CD or email). Proposals are to be submitted, sealed and marked as follows: **Request for Proposal – Needs Assessment Study, including Community Survey**, complete with your firm's name and return address. Vendors are responsible for ensuring that their bids reach the correct final location prior to the bid submission deadline. Fax submissions will not be accepted.
4. Your proposal will be considered if received not later than 12:00 noon, March 9, 2009 at:

**St. Albert Public Library
5 St. Anne Street
St. Albert, AB T8N 3Z9**

5. Prior to the submission deadline all questions or concerns regarding the technical aspects or the proposal process shall be submitted to:

Peter Bailey, Public Services Manager
5 St. Anne Street
St. Albert, AB, T8N 3Z9
Phone: (780) 459-1686
Fax: (780) 458-5772
Email: pbailey@sapl.ab.ca

II. Proposal Review and Evaluation

1. The intent of the evaluation process is to select the consultant best suited for the study.
2. Proposals will be opened in private following the proposal submission deadline. The final results will not be released until a contract has been awarded by the Library.
3. The Library reserves the right to request clarification of the contents of any submission, to accept or reject any proposal, and to extend the allocated period for negotiations.
4. Following the preliminary evaluation of the proposal submissions, the Library may elect to call for presentations from some or all of the vendors.
5. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
 - i) Experience and qualifications, particularly as to community surveys
 - ii) Proposed approach to undertaking this work
 - iii) References
 - iv) Budget and deliverables
 - v) Work plan, schedule and availability, plus ability to work with Library staff
 - vi) Knowledge of public library environment, including facilities
 - vii) Understanding of the project scope and objectives
6. The Library reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and need not accept the lowest, or any proposal.

IV. Contract Award

1. If the Library's expectations are not met through the RFP process, the Library retains the right to cancel the process without award and to proceed with whatever solution, or combination of solutions, are in the Library's best interests.
2. Following the selection of the preferred vendor, the Library and the vendor may enter into the following processes:
 - i) final design and implementation strategy
 - ii) final contract negotiation and authorization
3. Should either of those processes not result in an agreement by both parties, the Library has the right to enter into negotiations with another vendor.

V. Issuance and Payment of Invoices

1. Invoices may be issued at two points. The first invoice may be issued upon completion of the community survey. The second invoice may be issued upon the acceptance of the final report by the Library. The first invoice will not exceed 50% of the total project cost.
2. Invoicing will be Net 30 days.

Appendix A Possible questions for Community Survey

Library Satisfaction

1. When you think about St. Albert Public Library what is the first thing that comes to mind?
2. How important is St. Albert Public Library to you and your family?
Extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important, or completely unimportant?
3. How important is St. Albert Public Library to the community as a whole?
Extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important, or completely unimportant?
4. What is your overall impression of St. Albert Public Library?
Please rank your response on a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means your opinion is “Very unfavourable”, 4 means you are “Neutral” and 7 means your opinion is “Very favourable”? You may choose any number between 1 and 7 to describe your opinion. If you have no opinion please indicate no opinion.
5. For each of the following words and phrases, please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that the phrase describes St. Albert Public Library.
 - a) *Has a welcoming atmosphere and feel*
 - a) *Has convenient hours*
 - b) *Provides a variety of books and other items*
 - c) *Has a good selection of books and other materials*
 - d) *Has friendly, helpful and knowledgeable staff*
 - e) *Is accessible to all residents*
 - f) *Has something for everyone*
 - g) *Is a gathering place for community residents*
 - h) *Stays current with new technologies*
 - i) *Meets the needs of the community*

Library Use

6. How often have you, yourself, visited in-person the public library in the past year?
Daily, At least once a week, At least once a month, Every couple of months, Never
7. If you marked “Never” in Question 6 above, please tell us why below and then go to question 14

You have indicated that you use the library less than once a month or never. Please tell me the main reason why you don't use the Library:

- a) *Too busy*
- b) *Don't read*
- c) *Not interested*
- d) *Buy books*
- e) *Get information from other sources*
- f) *Use the Internet for information*
- g) *Use library at school or work, or other library*
- h) *Library isn't accessible*
- i) *Library services / materials aren't suitable/satisfaction*
- j) *Library hours not convenient*
- k) *Facilities are not welcoming*
- l) *Uncomfortable in libraries*
- m) *Membership fee is too high*
- n) *Worried about getting fines*
- o) *No parking*
- p) *Other (specify)*

8. How do you usually go to the Library? *Car, Bus, Bicycle, Walk, Other*

9. What other activities do you combine with a Library visit?

Shopping, Work, Entertainment, Professional Services (doctor, dentist, etc), Community Services,

10. Please tell me, how much you agree with the following. That is, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree? I would visit or use the library more if they offered...[READ LIST]

- a) *More comfortable facilities*
- b) *More accessible locations*
- c) *Better parking*
- d) *More recent books and other materials*
- e) *More of the magazines I like to read*
- f) *Longer loan periods*
- g) *Shorter wait times for materials*
- h) *More programs that interest me*
- i) *Different hours*
- j) *More Internet workstations*
- k) *More formats (E-Books, Blu-Ray discs)*
- l) *More or better eAudiobooks*
- m) *Wireless Internet access*

11. What days do you usually use the Library? *Weekdays* *Weekends*

12. What times do you use the Library? *Mornings Afternoons Evenings*

13. In the past year, when you visited the public library in person, did you...? [READ LIST] [YES/NO FOR EACH]

- a) Borrow books*
- b) Borrow audiobooks or music CDs*
- c) Borrow videos or DVDs*
- d) Borrow other materials*
- e) Go to read*
- f) Go to study*
- g) Do a school or class assignment*
- h) Use the Internet*
- i) Access electronic databases*
- j) Get information on a topic of personal interest*
- k) Take a child to a program or activity*
- l) Attend a lecture, program or meeting*

14. On a typical visit, how long do you spend in the library?

Less than 15 minutes, 15 to 30 minutes, 30 minutes to an hour, One to two hours, More than two hours

15. What would you consider a reasonable amount of time to wait for a popular book that you have placed on hold? [READ LIST]

Less than one month
1-3 months
3-6 months
6 months to a year
More than a year

16. What would you consider a reasonable amount of time to wait for popular DVD that you have placed on hold? [READ LIST]

Less than one month
1-3 months
3-6 months
6 months to a year
More than a year

Library Facilities

Over 25 years ago, in 1983, when the Library moved into its current home in St. Albert Place, there was plenty of room for people and materials. But the rapid growth of the city meant that by 1999 the Library had reached the facility's design capacity of 100,000 books and other items and serving a population of 50,000 people. Today space needs have become urgent, with every new book added to the Library requiring an existing book to be withdrawn. A 2002 study proposed more than doubling the Library's space to 53000 square feet. In 2007 City Council

approved a study which proposed keeping the Library's downtown location but adding a second location to solve space needs.

17. Do you agree with the plan to add a second location for the Library?

18. Are you willing to financially support the construction of a new library through your taxes?

19. Where would be the best location for a new library branch?

Northwest ("Badger" lands) Northeast (North Erin Ridge)

Southwest (Privately-owned Hole's development)

Two library locations will have many advantages for St. Albertans, but two locations will have increased operating expenses.

20. Are you willing to financially support the operation of two library locations through your taxes?

Given the current economic context of slowing growth and reduction in revenues, the City and the Library may have to look at Library space needs anew.

21. What would be your preferred option?

Continue with plans for a second location of 25,000 sq ft

Maintain the Library in one location, in a new large building with 53,000 sq ft

Add one or two smaller locations in existing buildings throughout the city.

Maintain the status quo. Allow service levels to diminish.

Other

Library Roles

The following is a list of roles that public libraries commonly serve. Please rank the relative importance you believe St. Albert Public Library **SHOULD** place on each role.

a) **Basic Literacy**

Basic literacy services to residents to improve reading skills

b) **Career and Business Information**

Information and services related to business, careers, employment, finances

c) **Community Commons**

A community gathering place, a central focus for community life and activities

d) **Community Information and Referral**

Current information and assistance with services, agencies and organizations.

e) **Cultural Hub**

Help citizens understand and value their cultural heritage.

f) **Formal Learning Support**

Assists enrolled students (elementary to post-secondary) to meet their educational goals.

g) **General Information**

Provides a wide array of information related to work, school and personal life.

h) Government Information

Provides information and assistance relating to government services.

i) Information Literacy

Assists in improving skills relating to finding, evaluating and using information.

j) Lifelong Learning

Assists with citizens' desire for self-directed personal growth and development.

k) Popular Materials Library

Focus on providing high demand materials in a variety of formats for all ages.

l) Pre-Schoolers' / Children's Door to Learning

Encourages an interest in reading and learning through programs and collections.

m) Local History and Genealogy

Assists in preserving and providing access to personal and community heritage.

n) Information Technology Centre

Provides access to information technology and global digital resources.

Library Communications

22. Currently, how do you find out about library services or programs at the Library?

Brochures/flyers at the Library for you to pick up

Brochures/flyers at other community location

Posters/bulletin boards at the Library

Posted on the website

Advertisements in local paper

I don't/Don't see anything

Other (specify)

23. When the library distributes information about programs, how would you prefer to find out about it?

Brochures/flyers at the Library for you to pick up

Brochures/flyers at other community location

Posters/bulletin boards at the Library

Via email

Posted on the website

Advertisements in local paper

Other (specify)

Demographics

And, now just a few final questions for our statistical calculations – again, all responses in this survey are kept strictly anonymous and confidential.

24. What is your age group?

25. What is your gender?

26. Where do you live?

St. Albert: Akinsdale, Braeside, Deer Ridge, Downtown, Erin Ridge, Forest Lawn, Grandin, Heritage Lakes, Inglewood, Kingswood, Lacombe Park, Mission, North Ridge, Oakmont, Pineview, Sturgeon, Woodlands **Other:**

27. What is the highest level of education you have completed? [READ LIST]

Elementary school (grades 1-8)

Some/completed high school (grades 9-13)

Some college or university, but no degree

Graduated university/college (B.A., B.Sc., B.Ed)

Graduate school/professional school (M.A, MSc., PhD, M.D, L.L.B)

Refused [DO NOT READ]

28. Would you be willing to participate in a focus group in the future to review the results of this survey as part of the Library's planning process?

Name, Phone Number, Address