

Bloomington Public Library

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February 22, 2012

RE: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Dear Consultant;

Bloomington Public Library (BPL), Bloomington, IL is requesting a proposal for the development of a master plan. This planning process will provide guidance for the future staffing, hours, collections, media, programming, and facilities development for the Library for the next ten years.

A planning study completed in 2001 identified necessary improvements to the main library, with the prospect that one or more branches would eventually be needed in our growing community. An addition of 7,000 square feet and renovation of the original 44,000 square feet was completed in 2006, bringing the total square footage of the current building to 51,000. Existing McLean County Comprehensive Plans for the past 20 years are available and a new plan is currently being developed. Data concerning community profile of demographics and mapping of City of Bloomington limits in digital\GIS format, budget and financial documents, library statistics and previous Library plans and studies are available.

The Library now seeks to revisit the following essential questions:

- ***How will public funding, technology, demographic, and other changes impact future public library service delivery in general and in Bloomington?***
- ***What strategic planning should Bloomington, possibly in cooperation with Normal, do to support future library service delivery?***
- ***How can the library best meet the future service needs of the community?***

- *What is the best strategy for making library resources accessible?*
- *What other options for providing access to the library's resources should be considered as an alternative to or in addition to a branch?*
- *Should the Library explore partnerships with other entities, intergovernmental agreements, library districts? What would be the pros and cons?*
- *Is a centralized building still the most suitable service strategy?*

Outline of Proposed Study

1. Community participation in the development of the plan is essential. The planning firm will be responsible for gathering this input. Please outline the methods you would use to gather input from the public to incorporate into the programming goals of the Library and services desired in the next ten years. Recommendations on how to meet the desired services should also be addressed. The planning firm will be responsible for all aspects of acquiring the information and compiling it.
2. Conduct interviews or meetings with City Council, Library Board of Trustees, Library Director, Department Heads and library staff for the development of the comprehensive plan.
3. Evaluate existing building and operations in correlation with the present and projected needs of the community for the next ten years. Develop recommendations for conceptual use of existing facilities and/or identify new programs and services to meet the needs of the community residents.
4. Deliver three to five options for meeting future library service delivery, including but not limited to, recommending if and how cooperation with the Town of Normal/Normal Public Library is feasible, with possible consideration of other public entities (school districts, community colleges, *Park & Rec*, etc).
5. The planning firm will need to present and review, perhaps on several occasions, the findings of the plan with the appropriate stakeholders after completion.
6. The consultant will provide 20 copies and a CD of the report.

Planning firms may provide information or recommendations for additional study or analysis with their packet or in their interview, if selected.

Community Characteristics

1. Like most cities, Bloomington is learning to operate in a new environment. This different reality is driven by the financial stress put on municipalities from many factors including:

- Higher unemployment, impacting both income and sales tax revenues .
- Decreasing home values, impacting property tax revenues .

- Decreasing federal and state subsidies as they now face their overwhelming deficit and debt issues.
 - Heightened resident questions about spending on all local government services, emphasizing the priority of lowered spending over increased taxes
 - Our city delivers a range of services to our residents, from the most essential police and fire protection to subsidizing of the arts.
3. The city must prioritize how flat or decreasing tax dollars will be spent delivering these services.
 4. Our residents are now questioning all service delivery expenses, even core life-safety expenses like police and fire; and are even more aggressively questioning quality-of-life expenses like parks, recreation, and cultural activities.
 5. While there will be varying opinions about where libraries fit on this city service spectrum, we know libraries fall somewhere between core and quality-of-life.
 6. Like all public (and private) information and technology service providers, public library operations are continually changing.
 7. Technology and demographic changes are rapidly impacting how, where, and when our residents use library services.
 8. As Twin Cities, there could be both lower cost and higher-quality service delivery by collaborating with the Town of Normal.

Consultant Experience and Qualifications

- Knowledgeable in current library best practices and future trends
- Provide unbiased solutions (recommending what's needed instead of perceived client preferences) and a menu of options for moving forward
- Methods for engaging community stakeholders in a conversation about libraries in our community
- Approaches and specific recommendations for community engagement, both now and in the future
- Techniques for building library support and advocacy throughout the community
- Sufficient staff and resources to complete this effort per our timeline.
- Experience with other twin cities and their unique relationship would be a plus, but not required in order for your proposal to be considered
- Expertise in recommending alternative funding options would also be a plus.

Proposal Submission

Please provide 15 copies and a CD of your proposal to include the following information:

1. Firm name and address
2. General history of the firm including but not limited to: number of years in business, names of owners/principals, geographical area of operations, professional affiliations
3. Amounts and kinds of professional insurance carried
4. Resumes of the personnel that will be assigned to this project

5. Additional consultants that you might propose to hire to supplement your firm's services
6. A time line for performing the master plan components along with personnel that will be assigned to the project team
7. Up to five other similar projects that you have completed in the past ten years, to include a brief description of the project, contact name, phone number and/or email address
8. Any other pertinent information that illustrates how you are qualified for the proposed project
9. References that may be contacted for each of the projects listed. Include name, title, address, and phone number for each contact person

This is a two step proposal process. Please submit your technical proposal in a sealed envelope separate from your cost proposal clearly identified as "technical proposal". Your cost proposal shall be submitted in a sealed envelope and clearly identified as "cost proposal." Both should be submitted together in the same external packaging.

Scope of work is intended to procure a quality product or service. Quality must be proven to the satisfaction of the Library to meet or exceed requirements as set forth in the scope of work. The lowest price will not be the deciding factor in the selection, but rather the quality of the product or the ability to provide a service or meet the specific needs of the Library.

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the written submissions of each consultant's proposal. The comments of the consultant's previous clients will also be considered. The following are not ranked in any order of importance.

1. There shall be a clear assignment of responsibilities for the project tasks to specific individuals. All individuals with major project responsibilities should be identified.
2. The consultant's ability to effectively present the results to both governmental and civic organizations.
3. The consultant's demonstrated ability to incorporate public input into the process.
4. Project references from past clients.
5. Proximity and ability to provide services on a timely basis.
6. Past projects completed by the consultant similar in scope.

Questions may be addressed to Georgia Bouda, Director, Bloomington Public Library at 309.557.8901 or georgiab@bloomingtonlibrary.org.

Responses should be addressed to:

Georgia Bouda

Bloomington Public Library
205 E. Olive Street
Bloomington, IL 61701

Proposal Opening

Proposals will be accepted through 1:00pm on March 23, 2012. Telephone, fax, or verbal offers will not be accepted. Proposals will not be publicly opened and read at the time and date set. Proposals not received by the deadline will not be considered. The Library reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

The Library is likely to want to interview three finalists in early April in person or via Skype. The final consultant will be recommended to the Board on April 17th. Upon approval by the Library Board, a contractual agreement will be negotiated between the Library and the planning firm that outlines a final scope of services to be completed by the firm and the compensation for the project.

The City of Bloomington requires all contractors and contractors doing business with the City not to discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, gender, ancestry, national origin, marital status, mental or physical disability unrelated to ability, familial status or sexual orientation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Georgia Bouda
Director