RFP INTRODUCTION:
RFP Title: Facilities Planning Strategy
Date Issued: February 25, 2020
Contact Person: Kim Neher (509-663-1117 x141)
Email Address: kneher@ncrl.org
RFP Due Date: March 17, 2020 at 4:00pm

SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO:
Mailing Address: North Central Regional Library
Attn: Kim Neher
16 N Columbia Street
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Digital Submittal: kneher@ncrl.org

North Central Regional Library is an equal opportunity employer.
Minority and women-owned businesses are encouraged to respond.

OVERVIEW:
North Central Regional Libraries (“Library”) is seeking proposals from qualified consultants to lead a highly collaborative process with the Library’s leadership, staff, and stakeholders to develop a clear vision for the role physical facilities play in serving strategic goals, customer needs, and experience principals throughout the library system. The consultant must have experience in service design, design thinking, strategic visioning, programming, and innovative library facilities design.

Proposals must be received by March 17, 2020. The Library will review proposals and expects to select a consultant based upon proposal documents, references, and (optional) interviews with the top consultants. The Library will then negotiate and sign a contract no later than April 6, 2020. Work with the chosen consultant will begin in May or June, 2020.

BACKGROUND:
North Central Regional Libraries is a public library system serving five counties in Washington State (Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Grant, and Okanogan). Geographically, it is the largest and one of the most rural of Washington’s library systems, covering nearly 15,000 square miles and serving a population of just over 270,000. The Library operates 30 public library branches and has administrative offices in Wenatchee. Among other things, branch libraries provide access to diverse physical and non-traditional collections, community meeting spaces, public access computers, free wifi, and a wide range of library programming for all ages. The Library’s website provides library card holders with free
access to eBooks and digital audiobooks as well as a large number of online resources, including Lynda.com, the New York Times, Consumer Reports, Rosetta Stone, and more. In addition, the library's outreach services include: enhancing library access to the most rural patrons through a unique mail order library and two bookmobiles; providing book sets to book clubs and classroom teachers through a popular book club collection; fostering creative thinking and STEM literacy through a STEM outreach program; and providing bilingual outreach services to preschools, head start classrooms, and community events.

The Library is currently in the second year of a three-year strategic plan, and is embarking on several major institutional changes related to five strategic directions: Embrace Innovation & Curiosity, Enhance User Experience, Actively Listen & Respond, Cultivate Community Partnerships, and Strengthen Organizational Health. Goals range from partnering with communities to expand rural broadband access, to launching a new name and brand (spring 2020), to developing comprehensive training plans for all staff. The entire plan can be accessed at [www.ncrl.org/ourstory](http://www.ncrl.org/ourstory).

**DESCRIPTION OF WORK:**
The Library began a first phase of work this spring to identify physical facility concerns through a Facility Condition Assessment process and anticipates having results in June 2020. This response for proposals is focused on a second phase of work that includes: (1) identifying a vision for user experience in the Library's facilities, and (2) developing short- and long-term actionable changes that can be made to enhance user experience in these facilities.

The selected consultant will create a System-Wide Facilities Vision, Service, and Master Plan to include a Strategic Vision for facilities aligned with community aspirations, an approach to facilities aligned with the Library's approach to services, and a facilities vision to incorporate best practices in creating positive customer experiences and learning outcomes.

Specifically, building on the goals, background, and challenges outlined later in this document, this work should result in a strategic approach to activating the facilities to create intentional conditions for the community's needs, interests, and outcomes to be realized.

The Library requests proposals from consultants that have experience in service design, design thinking, strategic visioning, programming, and innovative library facilities design.

**ENHANCE USER EXPERIENCE: Project Background & Challenges**
Each direction identified in the Library's strategic plan has two objectives and one or more goals listed per objective. This project's direction is to Enhance User Experience, and its objective is to provide access to experiences and materials by developing evolving, welcoming, and easy-to-navigate spaces and service models. The project's goal is to conduct thorough Facility Condition Assessments to
determine whether our library spaces meet community and staff needs.

**Project Background:**
The Library’s vision statement imagines a future in which “our welcoming and comfortable facilities provide a place for you to gather and exchange ideas.” For better or worse, the experience people have coming to the library is intrinsically tied to how the physical building makes them feel. And this feeling then often reflects their understanding of the value the Library is providing to their community. Public libraries can no longer be solely transactional environments. Communities need rich, engaging, user-centered spaces that highlight the vital resources and opportunities libraries provide.

While the Library doesn’t own the majority of its facilities, municipal leaders and community stakeholders are looking for the Library’s guidance and leadership to improve public library spaces in their communities. Over the past two years the Library has been contacted by 13 of the 30 communities with a branch library asking for information about embarking on major facility renovation, expansion, or replacement projects. In addition, during the Library’s strategic planning process 53% of interviewed stakeholders mentioned infrastructure when asked about pressing issues facing the library system, and 37% prioritized building updates and more physical space when asked what might increase use of the library in their community.

The Library owns 3.5 facilities:
- Administrative Offices and Distribution Center *(16 N Columbia Street, Wenatchee)*
- Community Bookmobile *(Wenatchee)*
- Rural School Bookmobile *(Omak)*
- ½ of Wenatchee Public Library

The Library operates out of 30 additional facilities:
- 22.5 are owned by the local municipality *(Brewster, Bridgeport, Cashmere, Chelan, East Wenatchee, Entiat, Ephrata, Grand Coulee, Leavenworth, Mattawa, Moses Lake, Okanogan, Omak, Oroville, Pateros, Quincy, Republic, Royal City, Soap Lake, Tonasket, Warden, Winthrop, and ½ of Wenatchee)*
- 4 are rented by the local municipality *(Coulee City, George, Twisp, and Waterville)*
- 2 are owned by local volunteer-run Friends of the Library Groups *(Curlew and Peshastin)*
- 1 is rented by the local volunteer-run Friends of the Library group *(Manson)*
- 1 is rented by the Library *(Omak Bookmobile Garage)*

**Project Challenges:**
North Central Regional Library provides public library service to over 270,000 people in five counties through 30 community libraries, two bookmobiles, and an administrative and distribution center. These library facilities had over one million visits in 2018, or 3.9 visits per person - lower than both state and national averages. In comparison, Washington State ranks 15th in the nation for library visits, with an average of 5.28 visits per person.
Community library spaces are primarily provided by the local municipality under a 10-year Maintenance & Use Agreement. Contracts were last signed in 2014 and are due for renewal in 2024. Under these contracts, it is the municipality’s responsibility to provide “a building or space within a building suitable for use as a branch library and shall maintain such library quarters in good repair and maintenance for library purposes.” In return, the Library agrees to reimburse the municipality for janitorial, repair, and maintenance expenses each year on a cost per square foot basis.

Many of the spaces the Library occupies have issues that are negatively impacting access and use by members of their communities. Some spaces do not comply with basic ADA requirements, some have leaking roofs or failing HVAC equipment, some are too small for the population they serve, and some are simply not designed with user experience in mind. The Library is concerned about the impact of these issues on overall provision of services in these communities.

**RFP SCHEDULE:**
These dates are estimates and are subject to change by the Library.

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFP Release</td>
<td>February 25, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions Due</td>
<td>March 6, 2020 at 12:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Addenda Issued (if needed)</td>
<td>March 10, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal Responses Due</td>
<td>March 17, 2020 at 4:00pm</td>
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<td>Interviews (if needed)</td>
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**QUESTIONS REGARDING RFP:**
Questions about the content or submittal requirements of this RFP should be submitted via email to Kim Neher (kneher@ncrl.org) by noon, March 6. Kim Neher is the sole point of contact at the Library for questions regarding this solicitation. Questions via telephone will not be accepted. Responses will be provided via email by noon, March 10 and posted on the Library’s website.

**SUBMITTAL CONTENTS:**
Responses to this RFP must include the following. Please limit your Proposal to no more than twelve (12) pages, single or double-sided.

**Cover Letter:**
Please include a letter of interest that includes: (1) the identification of the firm, including name, address, email address, and telephone number; (2) the name, title, address, email address, and telephone number of a contact person during the period of Proposal evaluation (if different); and (3) the
signature of a person authorized to bind the firm to the terms of this Proposal.

**General Company Profile & Experience:**
Please provide a statement of the firm's experience and qualifications to meet the requirements of the Library as outlined herein. Include a brief overview and history of your company, number of years in the business of performing work of a similar nature, number of employees, corporate headquarters location, and type of business.

**Professional Credentials of Key Staff:**
Please identify and list the functions of the key staff who would be assigned to work with the Library under this contract. Briefly describe a summary of the professional credentials and experience of the lead point of contact and key assigned staff. Do not include lengthy resumes or vitae.

**Methodology & Approach:**
Detail the firm's proposed approach to the work outlined herein. In general terms, please indicate why your firm is best suited to meet the challenges listed earlier in this document. Include a description of how the firm will research and observe existing facility conditions and its approach to working with staff and soliciting input from the community.

**Proposed Project Plan:**
Detail the firm's proposed project plan aligned with the firm's approach to the required work. Include a description of how the firm will approach the project and gather information to develop the finished products, including onsite visits, research, staff interviews, community input, and observation periods.

**Cost Summary:**
Detail the firm's proposed project fees, including estimates for any required reimbursable expenses (travel, etc.).

**Client References:**
Detail your firm's experience in providing the services requested herein for similar customers of similar size, with dates of performance and/or completion, customer name, contact person, and telephone number(s). By providing such references you agree that neither the Library nor the clients referenced shall have any liability regarding the provision of such references or the Library's use of such references in making selections under this request for proposals.

**Sample Work:**
Please include examples of similar or related work you have completed for similar customers of similar size.
SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:
Submit one (1) digital (kneher@ncrl.org) and three (3) hard copies of the complete proposal response to North Central Regional Library, Attention: Kim Neher, 16 North Columbia Street, Wenatchee, Washington 98801 by 4:00pm on March 17, 2020. Firms are reminded that the Library is a public agency, therefore, following opening, the proposals may be subject to requests for review and disclosure under the Washington State Public Records Act (Chapter 42.56 RCW)

EVALUATION PROCEDURES:
Firms are encouraged to be creative in responding to this RFP. Qualifications will be evaluated by a Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will consider the completeness of a firm’s qualifications and how well the proposal meets the needs of the Library. In evaluating the proposals, the Library will be using a criteria evaluation process. The Library will consider price but is not required to select the lowest cost provider.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:
Qualifications of firms will be evaluated by the Library Selection Committee based upon the responsiveness of the Proposals to this RFP, which may be weighted by the Library in any manner it deems appropriate. Interviews, if considered necessary, will be held with selected firms based on an evaluation of the Proposals. All Proposals will be evaluated using the criteria listed below:

- Cover Letter – 5 Pts
- Company Profile & Experience – 15 Pts
- Professional Credentials of Key Staff – 5 Pts
- Methodology & Approach – 20 Pts
- Proposed Project Plan – 20 Pts
- Cost Summary – 10 Pts
- Client References – 15 Pts
- Sample Work – 10 Pts

The Library reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals and to determine which Proposal is, in the best judgment of Library, the most responsive proposal based upon Library needs, of a responsible proposer or group of proposals and which proposal, if any, should be accepted in the best interest of the Library.