REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: SPACE UTILIZATION STUDY

Summary

The Ypsilanti District Library (YDL) seeks a qualified library consultant to develop a Space Utilization Study and Recommendation (“Study”) for two of our three locations: the main library, located at 5577 Whittaker Road, and the downtown branch, located at 229 W. Michigan Ave., both in Ypsilanti, Michigan. The purpose of the Study is to provide an analysis of and recommendation for changes to the internal configuration of both locations to maximize effective usage of library space by the community. The Study should include a formal report, conceptual designs, timeline, and cost estimates that address both limitations and opportunities for reconfiguring the space to better meet current and future community needs. The Study should identify near-term changes in the layout of services, collections, wayfinding, and traffic flow that could improve public service and staff effectiveness without employing significant structural alterations.

The YDL plans to use its staff in-service day (May 31, 2019) as a Study-related brainstorming session. Responding firms must be available to present to and collaborate with YDL staff (65 members) on this day.

Background

The YDL serves three municipalities on the eastern edge of Washtenaw County: the City of Ypsilanti, the Township of Ypsilanti, and the portion of Superior Township not assigned to the Ann Arbor Public School district. YDL operates a location in each municipality, two of which shall be included in this Study (Ypsilanti City and Ypsilanti Township). As background, the YDL mission and vision statements, along with its 2017-2021 strategic plan can be found at http://www.ypsilibrary.org/about.

The City branch, located at 229 W. Michigan Avenue, is located in an historic Carnegie Post Office building at the gateway to downtown Ypsilanti. This two-story, 12,000 square foot structure received significant renovations in 2002 to better function as a modern public library. While the footprint of the building and the age of the structure present challenges, the internal layout also poses limitations for service delivery. If reflects a print-centric approach and considerable wear and tear from general usage that was vastly under-estimated when remodeled. Today, the downtown location is extremely busy and lies in close proximity to public transit stations, social service agencies, and youth support organizations. The role of the library in the lives of these at-risk community members is witnessed daily through heavy computer usage, utilization of the library building as a “safe space,” and as a destination for urban youth. The Study should thus recommend a design that supports the delivery of services to these struggling populations while strategically maintaining more traditional library services still utilized by City residents.

The Township location, 5577 Whittaker Road, is an award-winning building designed by Architect Dan Whisler which opened in 2002. This 60,000 square foot facility houses the YDL administrative offices and serves as the primary location for large community events and the bulk of research and circulating collections. The Whittaker Road library is an enormous source of pride for the district as a whole, and its soaring ceilings and contemporary design inspire visitors
from around the region. Like the downtown location, the internal configuration is collection-centric, however, and the 88” stacks with built-in custom lighting allows for few adjustments to the original layout, preventing the offering of new or expanded services outside of circulating collections. This reality conflicts with two competing interests: the general industry-wide trend of decreasing circulation statistics and the increased demand for study rooms, collaborative-use space, and YDL’s high and boisterous program attendance. The Study should provide alternative interior designs that support life-long learning, civic engagement, community gathering spaces, and self-directed technology usage, while maintaining quiet study areas and the more traditional library experience patrons have come to expect.

Scope of Work & Requested Deliverables

The respondent will work with staff in:

- Identifying architectural and engineering obstacles or limitations that may affect service delivery plans;
- Determining space needs and layouts of public areas based on current use and trends;
- Analyzing staff work areas, departmental usage, and square footage compared with industry standards;
- Analyzing the space adequacy of equipment and storage.
- Analyzing the space adequacy and delivery of public restroom services.
- Recommending wayfinding and signage devices (whether digital or physical/interior or exterior).
- Determining optimal locations for electrical outlets and wiring, along with recommending the reconfiguration or new delivery of IT services, such as training centers, wireless services, furniture with built-in technology, public access computers, laptop collections, etc.
- Determining space needs and layouts of public areas based on current use and trends that address collections, programs, quiet study rooms, meeting rooms, and collaborative work areas.
- Recommending specific interior design elements, including the consideration of furniture and shelving and what can be reused and what should be replaced or added, along with conceptual designs, cost information, and square footage broken down by use or service.
- Developing a phased approach to changes that minimize disruption to public service and allows for the completion of the project as time and budget permit.
- Presenting the plan to the Board and public.

Proposed Organization and Submission Requirements

- A cover letter describing the firm and project interest, including name, address, phone, email, and title of contact person.
- A summary of the consultant’s experience and qualifications. Recent experience (within five years) in library design or facility planning is preferred.
- Project personnel.
- Proposed methodology, project plan, and deliverables.
- Proposed timeline.
- References for at least three previous clients.
- Examples of completed interior work.
- Examples of past projects that came in under budget.
- An itemized quote for providing the service.
- Any additional information (not to exceed two pages) that you might deem helpful in the selection process.

The Ypsilanti District Library reserves the right to waive irregularities in and/or reject any and all responses to this Request for Proposal.

Complete and deliver your response by 5:00 pm, February 22, 2019 to:

Lisa Hoenig, Director
Ypsilanti District Library
5577 Whittaker Road
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
lisa@ypsilibrary.org
Phone: 734.879.1300

Please direct any questions to Lisa Hoenig before February 18.
Site visits may be arranged Monday-Friday, 10-5:00.

Respondents will be notified within 45 days of the proposal deadline.