

## **DOWNERS GROVE PUBLIC LIBRARY**

### **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING**

#### **1. Objective**

The Downers Grove Public Library (DGPL) seeks a consultant to develop a comprehensive 3-5 year strategic plan for the Library that includes a significant community research component. The library recently completed an [Equity Strategic Plan](#), which is intended to inform the full Strategic Plan.

#### **2. Deadline for Receipt**

Proposals must be received via email before 5:00 p.m. September 2, 2022. Proposals should be addressed to Julie Milavec, Library Director, Downers Grove Public Library and emailed to [jmilavec@dglibrary.org](mailto:jmilavec@dglibrary.org).

#### **3. Inquiries**

Inquiries must be made via email. Please address all inquiries to: [jmilavec@dglibrary.org](mailto:jmilavec@dglibrary.org). Telephone inquiries will not be addressed. Answers will be provided within 3 business days. All questions must be received no later than August 26, 2021.

#### **4. Organizational Profile**

Downers Grove Public Library (DGPL) in the Village of Downers Grove, IL is located approximately 25 miles west of Chicago. According to the United States Census Bureau, the Village of Downers Grove's population as of Census 2020 is 50,247, with a geographical land area consisting of 14.31 square miles. Downers Grove is a prime location to live, work, play and raise a family. Downers Grove has been recognized by Forbes Magazine as being one of America's Friendliest Towns (2012), based on four data points: percentage of owner-occupied homes, crime rate, charitable giving, and percentage of college graduates; by Livability.com as one of the Top 10 Livable Cities for Kids (2014) based on the following criteria: low crime rate, access to parks and green space, and highly rated schools; and by Library Journal as a 4-star library in 2020, one of only 262 libraries nationwide and only 16 in Illinois to receive a star rating. The library's collection includes approximately 300,000 items, with an annual circulation of over 1 million. There are over 100 staff members (66.2 FTEs). The library is open 72 hours per week, year round. The annual budget is \$5.8 million and the library is in sound financial shape.

The Downers Grove Public Library was started in 1891 when The Ladies Library Association began a small reading room above the Farmers and Merchants Bank on the northeast corner of Main and Curtiss in Downers Grove. In 1895, it held 600-700 volumes. The library experienced steady growth throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which included new structures and additions. Over 100 years after its founding, the residents approved an \$8.2 million referendum to reconstruct and update the library by adding an addition. The new 67,738 square foot building opened in February of 1999, which remains the current footprint of the building. Interior renovations

completed in 2014 and 2018 responded to service needs to help DGPL continue to be a place for **everyone** to discover, grow, play, and learn.

On April 25, 2018, the Board of Library Trustees of the Downers Grove Public Library approved Strategic Plan 2017-2020, which included purpose, values, core services, and strategic focus, in addition to goals, objectives, and actions. According to that plan, the purpose of the Downers Grove Public Library is to be a place for **everyone** to discover, grow, play, and learn; **everyone** is welcome and entitled to a sense of a belonging here. We make good on this promise by espousing the following essential values: providing barrier-free and equal access for all; making opportunities for and supporting lifelong learning; fostering relationships; being responsible with our resources; and exercising the freedom to seek, receive, and share information. We execute what we believe and hold in high regard by providing the following core services: developing and maintaining and up-to-date collection; presenting a variety of cross-cultural and entertaining programs for all ages; providing instruction, guidance, and access to physical and digital resources; delivering stellar customer service; and offering spaces for meeting, studying, creating, and having fun. Lastly, *how we focus our purpose and essential values to deliver these core services is inextricably linked to our strategic focus which is to excel in delivering service and managing community resources; engage with our community and the world; empower individuals at all ages and stages of life, and evolve with and alongside our changing community.*

When the pandemic postponed many of the 2020 goals, the Board of Library Trustees extended the timeline for Strategic Plan 2017-2020 into 2021. The equity, diversity, and inclusion work included in the 2020-2021 objectives led to the creation of an Equity Strategic Plan, which will be incorporated into the next full strategic plan. The [Equity Strategic Plan](#) was approved by the Board of Library Trustees on April 27, 2022.

## 5. Scope of Work

DGPL is seeking an experienced professional facilitator to perform the following:

- a. Facilitate the strategic planning process using a methodology effective for public libraries.
- b. Gather data through community research that focuses on library users, non-users, and stakeholders, including Board and staff, to identify Library needs/wants.
  - i. Community input is a key component of this planning process and may include:
    1. Focus groups/individual interviews/public input sessions
    2. Online survey
    3. Phone interviews
    4. Other methods as identified by the consultant. Please include your proposal suggestions for handling research.

- c. Facilitate planning meetings and input sessions (public, Board, and staff sessions).
- d. Review the current purpose and values statements and facilitate revisions.
- e. Identify service priorities, goals, objectives, and activities.
- f. Write and present the strategic plan that will be communicated to the library's stakeholders. The final deliverable should include:
  - i. An up-to-date community profile and identification of community markets.
  - ii. An assessment of the library's environments, including evaluation of strengths and weaknesses, quality of services, reputation, management, and budget, etc.
  - iii. Clear, concise, and attainable goals, objectives, and activities that are measurable and for which the library will hold itself accountable.
  - iv. Prioritized implementation and key milestones for each initiative.
  - v. Specification of a built-in process of regular review, evaluation and adjustment to the plan resulting from changes in the economic, demographic, or political climate.
- g. All raw and summary data is to be delivered to GPL at the conclusion of the planning process.

## **6. Proposal Content Requirements**

- a. A cover letter providing a brief description of the firm or individual name, address of consultant, telephone number, and email of principal contact person.
- b. Executive summary of the highlights of the proposal, not to exceed one page in length, conveying the consultant's understanding of the purpose and expected outcomes of the project.
- c. A list of key personnel who would be involved in the process and their experience/expertise. If you plan to contract with a third party vendor to conduct the community research component, please identify which firm you plan to use.
- d. A summary of the consulting firm's qualifications and relevant experience.
- e. A work plan that includes a description of the methodology, tasks, timeline, and estimated total amount of time that would be spent on the project.
- f. Exclusions or exceptions. Note any parts of the proposal that are beyond the expertise of the consultant or would be better handled by Library staff.
- g. A schedule of costs that includes consulting, supplies, number of onsite visits, cost per trip, and other costs associated with the planning process. Costs for data gathering and analysis (community research component) must be listed separately.
- h. References and contact information for three (3) organizations for which

the facilitator has provided strategic planning services. A public library would be preferred as one of the three references.

## **7. RFP Standards and Selection Criteria**

- a. GPL reserves the right to cancel the award of contact any time before the execution of the contract by both parties. The responding consultants bear sole risk and responsibility for costs incurred in the preparation of the proposal.
- b. No Library Board or staff member shall have a financial interest in the proposal.
- c. In cases of disputes over differences of opinion as to the services in the proposal, the decision of GPL shall be final.
- d. GPL reserves the right to: ask for clarification in the proposal if the need arises; select a planning consultant based directly on the proposal; negotiate further with one or more respondents.
- e. GPL reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this RFP.
- f. The proposal will be evaluated by GPL and will include the following criteria:
  - i. Responsiveness of the written proposal to the purpose and scope of the project.
  - ii. Demonstrated knowledge, skills, and experience in conducting strategic planning projects for public libraries.
  - iii. Methodology and timeline for carrying out tasks in the scope of work.
  - iv. Cost to complete the process.
  - v. Ability to meet deadlines and operate within budget.
  - vi. Positive experience and success in strategic and library planning; satisfactory performance record (references).

## **8. RFP and Planning Process Timeline**

- a. Proposals must be received via email before 5:00 p.m. September 2, 2022.
- b. All questions must be received no later than August 26, 2022.
- c. Consulting firm selected will be discussed at September 28, 2022 GPL Board Meeting.
- d. Strategic planning begins in November, 2022.
- e. A draft report/plan and executive summary are to be submitted to the Library Director three (3) weeks in advance of the final deliverable date.
- f. Final deliverable to be presented in person at the July 26, 2023 Board Meeting.