



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Feasibility Study for Renovations to Downtown Children's and Teen Spaces

Issue Date: October 27, 2023

Proposal Due Date: December 1, 2023, 5 p.m. ET

Return Proposals to:

Elkhart Public Library
Administrative Services
300 South Second Street
Elkhart, IN 46516

Contact Person:

Mary Beth Schlabach, Director of Public Services
mschlabach@myepl.org

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND TIMELINE

Elkhart Public Library (EPL/Library) is issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit interest from qualified architectural firms (Firm) to develop a feasibility study proposal (Proposal). The successful Firm will provide expertise in envisioning the future space for Downtown Children's and Teen spaces (YPS) that allows the department to function more effectively and creates a bright and welcoming space for youth and their families.

Following completion of the feasibility study, the Library will determine whether to move forward into subsequent design phases for any of the proposed options. The Library reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to continue with the selected Firm or another, in subsequent design phases.

Project Timeline

- Requests for proposals will be available beginning: October 27, 2023
- The deadline for submission of Proposals is: December 1, 2023 at 5 p.m. ET
- EPL YPS Renovation Committee reviews proposal: Between December 4, 2023, and January 4, 2024
- Successful candidate notified: January 5, 2024
- Successful candidate submits draft contract for services: January 19, 2024
- Contract for services reviewed by the Library and Counsel: Between January 19 2024, and February 9, 2024
- Feasibility Study can begin on: February 16, 2024
- Feasibility Study completed and report submitted on: April 12, 2024

LIBRARY HISTORY

EPL Mission: Elkhart Public Library informs, inspires and empowers our diverse communities.

EPL Vision: Elkhart Public Library: Helping every person develop their fullest potential and our diverse communities grow strong and connected.

Since its founding 119 years ago, Elkhart Public Library has served our diverse communities as the leading provider of the most valuable resource that has ever existed: information.

The Library's service area comprises the Townships of Cleveland, Osolo, and Concord, as well as the small portion of the City of Elkhart that is not encompassed by these three townships. With a staff of 96 full- and part-time employees (77 FTE) and five locations – downtown, a branch in each of the three townships and one on the south side of the City of Elkhart – the Library serves a combined estimated population of just under 100,000 residents.

Elkhart Public Library has approximately 43,966 cardholders, 4,094 of whom are resident card holders under the age of 18, and 21,000 of whom are school district "ecard" users. Ecards provide access to digital services for all students enrolled in schools within the Library's service area. In addition, in 2014, Elkhart Public Library and nearby Goshen Public

Library formed a consortium in order to share an integrated library system. This arrangement allows Elkhart cardholders to check out materials from Goshen and vice versa. A delivery service between the two cities adds the convenience of patrons being able to request and pick up items from any of the locations in either system. Elkhart Public Library also has reciprocal borrowing agreements with the four other public libraries in the county.

Young People's Services at the Elkhart Public Library serves children from birth to eighteen and their caregivers. The downtown department currently has four full-time staff and three part-time reading tutors. Each staff member has designated ages they work with; babies, preschool, school-age, and teens. They do this by maintaining a strong collection, offering a variety of programs, and collaborating with local organizations. The department underwent significant growth in 2022. During that year, for the first time in more than ten years, EPL hired a dedicated Teen Librarian. Since then we have seen significant growth in teen programming. The other 2022 addition was a reading tutoring program called Growing Readers. The Growing Readers Coordinator works with two additional reading tutors to provide one-on-one reading tutoring to 35 children a week.

More than 70 percent of Elkhart Public Library's funding comes from the property taxes paid by residents in the Library's service area. The remainder of EPL's funding comes primarily from local income taxes paid to the county and automobile registration fees collected by the state. The Friends of Elkhart Public Library, Inc. helps support programs and assists with funding for specific projects, materials, equipment, and furniture through supplemental grants throughout the year.

SCOPE OF WORK

The Elkhart Public Library is committed to a plan which would not increase the current tax rate for the Library's tax district residents. The Library has been actively saving funds for a number of years to ensure the most financially sound approach to renovating YPS and has tentatively earmarked \$1,000,000.00 for this project. However, total renovation costs will not be known until the feasibility study is complete and the size needed for the improved facilities is known. Following the feasibility study, when the cost of site improvements, building renovation and design, and building costs are known, the Library will consider and pursue other funding sources to complete construction.

The Feasibility Study shall include basic processes to:

1. Evaluate the building site and grounds to determine the available options for expansion of YPS spaces, be it reimagining Library space or creatively expanding the building.
2. Work closely with the YPS Department Head and Director of Public Services to understand needs, priorities, and wants.
3. Include findings from the strategic plan community survey that is relevant to the project.
4. Identify size and amenities required to meet service needs.
5. Develop optional building project cost estimates to meet requirements.
6. Develop a well-organized report booklet and electronic presentation.

Below is a general description of each component:

1. Evaluate and determine opportunities and constraints of the building and site. Work with Library staff to explore reconfiguring Library space for YPS needs. Develop site specifications if/as required.
2. Incorporate youth services already provided, address pinch points (examples below) and wish lists.
 - a. Intentional and larger play space with sufficient line of sight from the YPS public service desk
 - b. Small areas and nooks for quieter play/reading
 - c. Shelving that is user friendly and offers better line of sight from the YPS public service desk
 - d. Multi-use programming space specifically designed for youth programming needs
 - e. Welcoming space/room for teens that balances privacy and supervision
 - f. Public Service Desk that meets staff needs
 - g. Office space for staff
 - h. Large standing work/prep area with sink and sufficient storage
 - i. Growing Readers tutoring space
 - j. Family restroom
3. Incorporate relevant findings from strategic planning process.
4. Develop building project cost estimates.
5. Develop a well-organized report booklet and electronic presentation. Develop a high quality and well-organized report book that captures all of the work of the study. This document will be referenced over the future months as the project is considered and shared with various groups. Also, an electronic presentation that summarizes and complements the report booklet is to be provided that will allow personal presentations as well as web posting.

RECEIPT OF PROPOSAL

In order for the Proposal to receive full consideration, the receipt of one (1) paper copy of the Proposal in a sealed envelope and one (1) electronic copy in PDF format is required. The **Submission Deadline is** December 1, 2023 at 5 p.m. ET. Proposals become the property of the Library at the time of submission and are subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act and Indiana Public Access laws.

The sealed envelope shall be entitled **“Feasibility Study for Downtown YPS Spaces”** and sent to the contact information below; the electronic copy shall be sent to the email address listed below:

Submit Printed Proposal to: Elkhart Public Library
Administrative Services
300 South Second Street
Elkhart, IN 46516

Electronic (PDF) Proposal: Mary Beth Schlabach, Director of Public Services
Phone: 574 522-3333 ext. 1008
Email: mschlabach@myepl.org

Proposals sent by mail should allow sufficient delivery time to ensure receipt by the deadline. Proposals received after the deadline will be returned to the proposer unopened.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS

All Proposals shall contain the following elements:

1. Project Experience
 - a. Please include a minimum of three (3) relevant public projects most similar to this project.
 - b. Include related images, description, design awards and project information.
2. Firm Information
 - a. A brief description of the Firm's history, ownership, organizational structure and library design philosophy.
 - b. Facilities – Office locations and contact information.
 - c. Person authorized to execute agreements on behalf of your Firm for this project.
 - d. Reference – Please list a minimum of three (3) clients for which the Firm has performed similar work. Include the necessary contact information for the client/person.
3. Team
 - a. Include your proposed personnel for this project and their assigned roles on the project.
 - b. Include key personnel resumes, similar project experience, and professional licenses and certifications.
 - c. Clearly identify your proposed Project Manager, who would serve as the Library's main point of contact for the duration of the project.
 - d. Identify any consulting firms that you plan to be a part of your design team on this project and their successful collaboration working with your Firm.
4. Scope of Services – Respondent should explain their process, scope of services, and project deliverables, along with a timeframe for each deliverable item. This should be based on the scope of services described above. Respondents should feel free to propose a different process they believe may provide a better outcome for the Library. If so, please explain the benefits.
5. Professional Fees – Please include a total price for the feasibility study as well as a breakdown of costs.
6. Contracts – State the preferred form of standard agreement used by the Firm for projects of this nature.
7. General Information:
 - a. Conflict of Interest – Disclose any potential conflicts of interest that the Firm may have in performing the requested services for the Library.

- b. Statement of assurance – to the effect that the Firm is not currently in violation of any regulatory rules, regulations, or litigation that may have an impact on the Firm’s operations.
- c. Any other information that may help the Library evaluate the Proposal.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Final Proposal evaluation and selection may be based on, but not limited to, any or all of the following:

1. Proven qualifications and project experience in conducting similar public project feasibility studies.
2. Demonstrated track record of working with communities and stakeholder groups.
3. Ability of proposer to provide quality and timely products and services.
4. Quality of information presented in the Proposal.
5. Client References.
6. The proposer’s fee for the project.
7. Other factors determined to be in the best interests of the Library.

The Library reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals; to call for new Proposals; to waive any irregularities in the Proposals if deemed to be in the best interest of the Library; to negotiate changes in the scope of work or service provided or portions thereof; and to select the Proposal considered to be the most advantageous to the Library. The lowest fee may not necessarily be the most acceptable for the project. The Library shall base its award criteria on multiple factors, not just cost factors.

MISCELLANEOUS

- The Library shall not be liable for any costs incurred by the proposer for the preparation or production of the Proposal or for any work performed prior to the execution of a contract.
- Proposers who have questions concerning this RFP shall contact Mary Beth Schlabach no later than ten (10) business days before the submission deadline. All questions and answers will be posted at: <https://www.myepl.org/rfp-downtown-children/> no later than 5 days before submission deadline.
- The final selection shall be made at the sole discretion of the Library Director. The Library Director or Library staff may request additional information from proposers or request personal interviews with one or more proposers.
- Elkhart Public Library is an equal opportunity employer (EEO). We hire without regard to race, color, gender, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other characteristic protected by law.