



## **Strategic Planning Request for Proposal November 11, 2022**

### **Objective**

The Aurora Public Library District seeks a culturally competent consultant to work with us to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for the library, so that we may better serve our vibrant and diverse community.

### **Deadline for receipt**

Proposals must be received via email by December 19, 2022.

Proposals may be addressed to Michaela Haberkern, Executive Director, Aurora Public Library District and should be emailed to [michaela@aurorapubliclibrary.org](mailto:michaela@aurorapubliclibrary.org).

### **Inquiries**

Inquiries must be made via email. Please address all inquiries to: [michaela@aurorapubliclibrary.org](mailto:michaela@aurorapubliclibrary.org). Questions will be addressed within 5 business days. All questions must be received no later than December 12, 2022.

### **Community Profile**

The Aurora Public Library District's service area is contiguous with the boundaries of the City of Aurora, Illinois. With a population of 180,582 according to 2020 U.S. Census data, Aurora is the second largest city in Illinois, located 41 miles west of Chicago and stretching across four counties: Kane, DuPage, Kendall, and Will. Aurora is accessible by rail on the BNSF Metra commuter line and by five interchanges on the Interstate 88 East/West tollway corridor. The city is bisected by the Fox River accompanied by the Fox River Trail, which intertwines with the more local Virgil Gilman Trail.

Aurora is diverse by any measure. 42.7% of the population identifies as Hispanic or Latino, 34.9% as non-Hispanic white, 10.5% as African American, and 9.3% as Asian. Similarly, languages besides English are common in Aurora, with nearly 70,000 Spanish-speakers, 1,900 Tagalog, and a significant Urdu speaking population of 1,318. 45.3% of households speak a language other than English at home. 25.6% of Aurora residents are foreign-born.

Median household income is \$74,659, above the \$68,428 average household income across Illinois. 10% of Aurora's population meets federal poverty guidelines. 72.1% of Aurora's working age population is in the workforce, compared to 65.1% in Illinois as a whole. Nearly 80% of Aurora residents are high school graduates or higher, and 33% have a bachelor's degree or higher. Over 12% of households lack access to robust computing and Internet services for critical functions such as completing online job applications, banking, supporting their child's education, and general information access.

Aurora Public Library District facilities include the Richard and Gina Santori Public Library in the heart of downtown, the Eola Road Branch serving the east side, and the West Branch situated adjacent to Washington Middle School on the west side of Aurora. In addition, our active Outreach Services Department reaches students in six school districts and various community centers across four counties. The Outreach Services Department includes our Bookmobile, and the library has been serving our community with bookmobiles since 1953.

## Scope of Work

APLD is seeking an experienced professional to facilitate the strategic planning process using a methodology effective for public libraries; to gather data through community research; to conduct an environmental analysis with key stakeholders; to fully utilize community information already at the library's disposal; and to engage all stakeholders to design a plan that helps the library serve the community better. In particular, the library would like to connect with our underserved population, and to remove barriers to service.

Community input is critical, and every component must include access for Spanish speakers. Use of a third-party research firm for demographic research or surveying is acceptable. Fees and recommended firms should be included in the final proposal.

APLD's process priorities include:

- Regular planning meetings with administration and the board's strategic plan committee
- Robust board and staff participation
- Review and revision of the current vision statement
- Identification of top-level service priorities
- Engaging and interactive community conversations

## Deliverables

- Write and present the strategic plan that will be communicated to the library's stakeholders
- Comprehensive demographic and geographic analysis of our service area
- An assessment of the library's internal competencies, including a clear-eyed evaluation of strengths and weaknesses, services, reputation, management, and budget, etc.
- A statement of vision, mission, and core values that reflects the library and the unique community we serve
- Clearly defined top-level service priorities and next-level goals for which the library can hold itself accountable
- Specification of a measurement/assessment tool or framework
- 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
- All raw and summary data is to be delivered to APLD at the conclusion of the planning process

## Proposal Content Requirements

- A cover letter providing a brief description of the firm or individual; name; contact information for the principal person.
- Executive summary of the highlights of the proposal, not to exceed one page in length, and conveying the consultant's understanding of the purpose and expected outcomes of the project.
- A list of key personnel who would be involved in the process and their expertise/experience.
- A summary of the consulting firm's qualifications and relevant experience. The successful firm and their subcontractors will have demonstrated expertise in library operations, services, trends and functions as well as strategic planning experience.
- 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.
- A schedule of costs that includes consulting, supplies, number of onsite visits and cost per trip, and other costs associated with the planning process. Costs for data gathering and analysis (community research component) must be listed separately.
- References and contact information for three organizations for which the firm or individual has provided strategic planning services.

## RFP Standards and Selection Criteria

APLD reserves the right to cancel the award of contract 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.

No library board or staff member shall have a financial interest in this proposal.

In cases of disputes over differences of opinions as to the services in the proposal, the decision of APLD shall be final.

APLD reserves the right to ask for clarification in the proposal if the need arises, and to select a planning consultant based directly on the proposal or to negotiate further with one or more respondents.

APLD reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this RFP.

The proposal will be evaluated by APLD and will include the following criteria:

- Responsiveness of the written proposal to the purpose and scope of the project
- Demonstrated knowledge, skills, and experience in conducting strategic planning projects
- Methodology and timeline for carrying out tasks in the scope of work
- Cost
- Ability to meet deadlines and operate within budget
- Positive experience and success in strategic planning

## RFP and Planning Process Timeline

Proposals must be received via email by December 19, 2022.

All questions must be received no later than December 12, 2022.

Consultant interviews will tentatively be scheduled for February 2023.

Consulting firm will likely be selected and confirmed at the March 2023 board meeting.

Strategic planning process begins April 2023.

A draft report/plan and executive summary are to be submitted to the Executive Director four weeks in advance of the final deliverable due date.

Final deliverable to be presented in person at the September 2023 APLD Board meeting.