

MERRILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Request for Proposal for Strategic Planning Consultant

A. Purpose

The Trustees of Merrill Memorial Library (MML) are seeking proposals from qualified consultants to help guide, develop and write a 5-year strategic plan that aligns with MML's mission/vision/values.

B. Eligibility

MML is seeking a consultant who has demonstrated: a strong understanding of nonprofit institutions; excellent leadership and communication skills; proven organizational skills; ability to work with trustees, staff and community stakeholders; and proven experience in developing nonprofit strategic plans. Past experience working with public libraries is helpful but not required.

C. About Merrill Memorial Library

MML is supported by the Town of Yarmouth and serves as the community's free, public library. The library is administered by the Library Director and staffed by Town employees, with a citizen Board of Trustees responsible for strategic direction and the management and control of the land and building (Appendix A).

Joseph E. Merrill donated the land, built the library in 1904 and then deeded both to the Town of Yarmouth. Merrill's personal book collection formed the foundation of the library's initial inventory. The original footprint of the building was doubled in 1988 when a new addition was added and in 2014 a major building renovation was completed including the addition of a new entrance, new HVAC system, upgrades to life safety systems and the addition of community meeting space on the third floor.

The mission of MML is "to provide our patrons with educational, recreational and cultural enrichment, and opportunities for independent learning and personal and professional growth" and the vision is "to be the physical and intellectual anchor of Main Street, providing both space and opportunities to bring our community closer, elevate conversations and support positive change while preserving the small-town heart and soul of Yarmouth."

Staff oversee and provide a wide array of services to the library's many patrons. MML has 47,000 items in its collection and in 2021, loaned over 110,000 items. Merrill Memorial Library has:

- Adult collections – fiction, nonfiction, audio books, movies, large-print books, periodicals and newspapers
- Children’s services – preschool picture books, early-reader books, and board books and juvenile chapter and non-fiction books, periodicals, and audio books
- Youth and young adult collections

The library also provides a wide-array of programming for residents of all ages.

The Trustees completed a 5-year strategic plan in 2016 which has served as a guide for how the library can best serve the community (Appendix B). The adopted plan was referred to and reviewed annually and an annual implementation plan was developed.

The COVID pandemic interrupted MML’s usual and customary offerings. The library was closed for a short period early in the pandemic, however the staff responded very quickly to patrons’ needs by offering curbside service and creating online versions of many programs. As public health pressures eased, the library reopened and day-to-day operations are returning to pre-pandemic levels.

D. Scope of Work & Deliverables

The Trustees expect the consultant to clearly describe the scope of work he/she will perform in their proposal. The proposal will include:

- A description of the project management and facilitation process:
 - A plan that demonstrates an understanding of the work to be performed including:
 - Utilizing a methodology acceptable for similar organizations;
 - Engaging internal and external stakeholders to gather critical data; and,
 - Reflecting the needs of library’s constituents;
 - Qualifications of all consulting staff including experience in developing strategic plans and in data gathering to drive the process;
 - Comprehensive timeline; and,
 - Detailed cost estimates.

The proposal should describe how the consultant will work the Trustees/staff in the preprocess phase and the SP Committee composed of trustees, staff and community stakeholders once the process begins.

The proposal should also include three references familiar with the consultant’s experience in strategic planning. Contact information for each reference should be included.

It is expected the preplanning process will occur over the summer (including the formation of the Strategic Planning Committee), and the Committee, with the support of the consultant, will conduct the most intensive portion of the planning process, including gathering input from stakeholders and developing the initial draft of the written strategic plan, beginning in the fall of 2022. Ideally, the Committee would like to be in a position to present the draft plan to the Trustees at their April 2023 meeting.

E. Confidentiality

All intellectual property will become the property of the Merrill Memorial Library. All data will remain sole property of MML. Other than reports submitted to Trustees the consultant shall also agree not to publish, reproduce or otherwise divulge such information in whole or in part.

F. Process for Proposal Submission and Timeframe

- April 29, 2022 - RFP Release Date;
- June 24, 2022 - Closing Date. Proposals are due by the end of business;
- Inquiries regarding the proposal – Inquiries should be addressed to Timothy Kittredge at trustees@yarmouthlibrary.org;
- Proposals must be submitted electronically to trustees@yarmouthlibrary.org;
- July 2022 - Evaluations of proposals, interviews with highest ranking applicants and references will be contacted for all finalists; Selection and notification by email of applicant immediately following.