



Request for Proposals

Fox Branch Library, Arlington, MA

Facility Needs Assessment

#23-39

June 22, 2023



Introduction & Background

The Fox Branch Library, located at 175 Mass Ave in East Arlington, is a 11,000 square foot library serving the community with materials, programs, and community space. The 1968 library building includes a lower-level Community Room and storage space and main level collections areas along with play spaces for children and work space. The Fox and Robbin Shop, a resale shop supporting the Fox Branch Library, operates as a distinct space within the library.

Today, the Fox Branch Library is a dynamic community hub for East Arlington. The branch welcomed 56,473 visitors in FY22 and programs were available for everyone from babies to adults. Materials circulation has increased over 200% over the past decade. In response to community demand, the Town has supported increased hours and staffing to better meet community expectations for library services in East Arlington.

The Fox Branch Library lacks ADA access and faces additional building challenges.

In 2018, the Library unveiled the “Reimagining Our Libraries,” project, laying out a vision for library use, services, collections, and space to meet the needs of our changing and growing community. Funding priorities for the Town shifted, and the planned work was postponed.

In early 2023, library staff began to work with partners in Town leadership to investigate the feasibility of major construction at Fox Branch library, including finding a path to co-locate the Fox Branch Library with housing. An Arlington team is developing a fit and feasibility study to determine options for new construction that would bring a renovated Fox Branch Library and new housing to 175 Mass Ave.

Robbins Library seeks a consultant to support the library in creating a building program addressing the facility needs for the Fox Branch Library space for the May, 2024 Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP) grant application deadline and present the Library Director the documents and tools necessary to present a full building program to Board of Library Trustees, as required as part of the MPLCP grant.



Scope of Services

The scope of services should include, but not be limited to:

1. Project management and internal communications
 - a. Present a detailed work plan, including plans for scheduled phases for planning, review of materials, community engagement, and presenting the final report
 - b. Create an internal communications plan laying out a regular strategy for communicating with the library director
2. Research and discovery
 - a. Review background documents, including:
 - i. The MPLCP Library Building Programs guide
 - ii. Library Strategic Plan, including community feedback (completed in 2021)
 - iii. “Reimagining our Libraries documents (2016-2018)
 - iv. Town of Arlington Master Plan (current community analysis including demography, location, governmental organization, and community structure)
 - v. Arlington’s ADA Self Evaluation Report (2019)
 - vi. Town of Arlington Equity Audit (2023)
 - vii. Market area profile and demographic data analysis including 30-year population forecast (fall, 2023)
 - b. Research forward-looking library trends for presentation to the Library Facility Needs Committee
 - c. Apply library space guidelines and standards as defined to the MBLC to determine space requirements at Fox Branch Library, and summarize in table format
 - d. Hold discovery meetings with key stakeholders to inform subsequent community engagement efforts, if necessary

3. Communication and engagement

- a. Build a community engagement strategy to gather input and examine community and library needs with the Library Director, library staff, feasibility committee, and community groups
 - i. Recommend a community input strategy that includes some or all of the following: focus groups, community meetings, surveys, active engagement exercises, or other methods to gather input about community needs and impacts on library services, collections, programs, and facilities. The consultant will be responsible for advertising and conducting meetings and surveys in cooperation with Library staff, and recording and analyzing the results.
 - ii. Recommendations for engagement opportunities for non-English speakers. Town staff will support engagement with the ESOL community
 - iii. Respondents are welcome to respond with options for meeting ideas, activities, and schedules.

4. Presentations and reports

- a. Review drafts of public presentations and reports with Library Facility Needs Committee and Library Director
- b. Make formal presentations of the Facility Needs Assessment to:
 - i. Library Board of Trustees
 - ii. Library staff
 - iii. Fox Library Facility Needs Committee
 - iv. Arlington community members
- c. Present and review draft Building Program with Library Director

5. Provide other special consultations and optional services as directed and negotiated.



Project Deliverables

The following required items must be delivered during the project:

1. Project management and internal communications
 - a. Within 3 weeks of project initiation, the consultant will present a detailed work plan, including plans for scheduled phases for planning, review of materials, community engagement, and presenting the final report
 - b. An internal communications plan, laying out a regular strategy for communicating with the library director, discussing meeting agendas, and other touch points for communicating
 - c. A kick-off meeting will be held with the Facility Needs Committee to present the work plan and communication plan

2. Research and discovery
 - a. Create a high-level report for library stakeholders outlining key takeaways from background documents and library trend research
 - b. A summary table outlining library space guidelines and standards, as defined by MPLCP

3. Communication and engagement
 - a. An electronic copy of results of public feedback opportunities including but not limited to public meetings, surveys, and active-engagement exercises
 - b. A report that analyzes and synthesizes findings from community engagement sessions

4. Presentations and reports
 - a. Drafts of presentations and reports must be shared with the Library Director with adequate time for review and feedback
 - b. Electronic copies of all public presentation(s) and reports developed for the project.
 - c. A draft and final draft Building Program for the Fox Branch Library



Timeline

The timeline is as follows:

June 22	RFP is available on Town website
June 28	Optional pre-proposal meeting via Zoom (contact alitten@minlib.net)
June 28	Questions due to mdenatale@town.arlington.ma.us by 5:00 p.m.
July 12	Proposals submitted to mdenatale@town.arlington.ma.us by 5:00 p.m.
July 17-21	Interviews scheduled with consultants, if necessary
July 26	Consultant selected
August 8	Contract signed
August 14	Project initiation

All project work must be completed by March 31, 2024. Respondents must submit a full timeline as part of the application packet.



Responding to the RFP

Proposals must be submitted to Mary Ellen De Natale at mdenatale@town.arligton.ma.us

Please respond by end of business on July 12, 2023 with:

- A description of firm qualifications and resumes for all key personnel who will work on the project demonstrating experience in library space planning or strategic planning and experience working with diverse communities and stakeholders
- A description of the proposed approach and activities to be used in fulfilling the scope of work and creating all deliverables including a project timeline illustrating the sequencing of key activities, deliverables and milestones
- A sample meeting agenda for a community engagement session
- A list of three references for whom comparable services were provided in the last five years. Please include the name of organization, name of contact, phone

number and email address of contacts, and brief description of services provided and the dates of work

- A detailed budget, not to exceed \$40,000 for this project

Evaluation criteria

The library will choose the contractor who will deliver the most value for Arlington when considering Project Proposal and the proposed budget.

Proposals will be evaluated on:

1. The training, credentials and experience of the key personnel and qualifications of the firm;
2. The demonstrated competence, ability, capacity and skill of the key personnel to perform the contract or provide the services;
3. The capacity of the person or firm to perform the contract or provide the service promptly, within the time specified, and within the proposed budget; and
4. The soundness of the proposed approach and a track record of excellent work for similar clients as demonstrated through references.

The library shall have absolute discretion in determining the applicability and weight or relative weight of some or all of the criteria listed above and is not required to select the lowest monetary proposer. The award decision will be made by the Director of Libraries.

The library reserves the right to interview respondents (including by phone or video conference) and to conduct reference checks. Information obtained shall be used in the evaluation.

Any contract for services related to the RFP may be canceled if funds are not appropriated or otherwise made available to support the project.