Rochester Public Library
Branch Library Facilities and Operations Master Plan
Summary of Activities, Deliverables, Desired Outcomes

Problem Statement - Rationale
RPL branch services are delivered from ten physical structures and one satellite operation (Strong Museum) offering a range of services, collections, programs and community meeting spaces. These branches vary substantially in age, size, layout and access. Over time, communities, neighborhood environments, and activities provided in these facilities change; the facilities may also need to change and adapt to new uses, services and locations. This evaluation of branch operations is separate from, but also informs, required preventative maintenance and a program for replacement of major systems to ensure branch facilities remain clean, safe, in compliance with building codes, and usable by our public and staff.

Despite strong community support and consistent attendance and use of RPL branch libraries, investment in branch library infrastructure has declined precipitously since the opening of the Sully branch library at the Thomas P. Ryan Community Center in 2009. No new capital investment has been allocated for branch libraries since fiscal year 2009-10. However, state support of library construction has increased, with NYS Department of Education allocations to the Monroe County Library System members exceeding $900,000 in 2017. All branch libraries have the opportunity to receive up to 75% state funding support for renovations that enhance branch library services.

The usage of libraries, the myriad ways in which they serve our community and the return on investment with matching funds presents a strong case for City and private investment in our facilities. The case for where and how to invest in branch libraries needs to be more strongly and consistently communicated, and presents an opportunity for the RPL with financial support from the Friends and Foundation of the Rochester Public Library.

The RPL seeks strategies to preserve and refresh branches, as well as to determine any gaps in library services to Rochester, with a plan that reflects an all-encompassing view of its diverse communities and their library needs and expectations. A facilities and operations plan will find innovative ways to connect communities and libraries and address the following objectives:

- Implement a fiscally responsible approach for recommending building plans for existing facilities, with a focus on improved access, use, and energy efficiency.
- Based on City demographic and library peer analysis, explore options for library support in underserved and overserved areas of the City.
- Incorporate new and emerging technologies and tools into our building structures, and determine if alternate means of traditional library operations are feasible.
- Present opportunities for change and flexibility to suit community needs with partner agencies that serve similar goals of the RPL.
- Provide a public input process to gather feedback from library users and potential users.
- Ensure compliance for all accessibility needs, in both structures and services.
**Consultant Solicitation**
The consultant solicitation process occurred through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It will be a priority that the architectural or planning firm as lead of a consulting team has extensive experience in evaluating public libraries, and branch systems in particular. For that reason, the RPL will look to examples of recent studies from regional firms in addition to local firms.

The proposal evaluation team included representative branch staff, branch administration and Board of Trustee representatives. The RFP will clarify the role of the consultant team, RPL management and trustees, and the Branch Plan Advisory Committee (BPAC) on how decisions and recommendations will be prioritized for each library building, current and future.

As funding for the study is underwritten by the FFRPL, the Board will be notified in January of the evaluation team’s recommendations. The offer and acceptance of proposal will be confirmed with RPL administration.

**Desired Scope of Work – Consultant, RPL, City, BPAC**
The Consultant’s primary work scope will be to project anticipated population growth in branch service areas, identify a peer grouping of libraries for comparison, establish the number, size, and capacities of library facilities needed for the RPL, evaluate current branch facilities and assign an action matrix based on agreed categories (i.e. refresh, re-configure, new, co-location, relocation, or closure). Where approved by the RPL, additional recommendations and analysis may be expanded for priority actions.

The RPL’s primary responsibilities will be to use recent RPL evaluations and Consultant survey results to propose new or modified library service delivery models and technologies, associated staffing models for the Consultant’s action matrix, and to evaluate and propose solutions to expand its delivery of services beyond branch library walls, in temporary locations, or in co-located spaces.

The City will support the plan by sharing GIS tools and files mapping current commercial and residential development patterns, main transportation routes, and community assets. City Environmental Services will provide existing building assessments and current capital requests for Branches, as well as requested plans/drawings.

The BPAC’s work will be to confirm library service needs, to determine if current and proposed branch services in each community meet the needs of that community, to advise the RPL on priorities of branch library facilities based on the Consultant’s action matrix, and to use agreed, shared criteria to determine the need for new or relocated branch services.

**Consultant Deliverables**
- Report recommending the total number of branch square feet per service area required for RPL to serve the City to the year 2025.
• Provide a guide to enable the RPL to advocate for what services are required at each location to support the needs of the community, meet state standards, meet or exceed peer comparisons, and anticipate library trends.
• Create an action matrix that visually depicts the priority, schedule, and broad capital costs for changes proposed, based on RPL/BPAC feedback.
• Recommend a schedule, scope, and preliminary budget for prioritized library renovations, expansions or new construction as identified by the RPL and BPAC.

**What the Consultant/Deliverables cannot do:**
• Provide a comprehensive and detailed library space program with cost estimates for renovations at each branch library building.
• Provide guidance on staffing levels or standards for staffing of new or renovated spaces.
• Provide recommendations on how the RPL should provide services, and which agencies should partner or co-locate with the RPL.
• Create a detailed current facility conditions survey (this is the responsibility of the City).

**Roles and Responsibilities**
**Branch Administration:** Primary engagement with Consultant and BPAC, scheduling and coordination of BPAC sessions and recruitment.

**Branch Staff:** Representatives on the BPAC, participate in Consultant interviews, review forum with RPL administration and Trustees with final recommendations

**Library Facilities and IT:** Secondary engagement with Consultant, primary engagement with City NBD and DES. Coordinate building access and data sharing between City/Consultant.

**Library Management and Trustees:** Endorse BPAC enrollment, re-establish Board Building Committee with BPAC representation. Review preliminary Consultant recommendations prior to full public document. Participate in Branch staff forum to discuss final report.

**City Partner Agencies:** Provide access to requested data by Library Facilities and IT; review preliminary recommendations for action matrix. Continue with ongoing facility assessments.

**Branch Plan Advisory Committee**
The BPAC should include a geographically diverse representation of branch service areas, with desired representatives as follows:

• City Council – new liaison and/or staff representative
• City DES – architectural representative for buildings
• City NBD – planning representative for demographic and location analysis, NSC representative(s) as neighborhood connectors
• Connected communities – neighborhood associations (minimum one each quadrant)
• Others identified through continued branch staff engagement
Priority agency engagements include: Catholic Family Center, Beechwood/EMMA, Prosper Rochester, Quad Common Councils, City Quad Teams, RCSD, RPD, DRYS, Healthi Kids

It is intended that the BPAC is led by Branch Administration, with 1-2 meetings with the Consultant, and 1-2 follow up meetings to present recommendations from reports to the RPL.

**Proposed Schedule (original to RFP; will be shifted based on proposal evaluation period)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultant Procurement</td>
<td>November-December 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site visits/data assessments</td>
<td>December 2017-January 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission/acceptance of peer libraries</td>
<td>by January 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff &amp; stakeholder meetings</td>
<td>January-February 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Report and Matrix</td>
<td>March 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>RPL internal review</td>
<td>April 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Report</td>
<td>by May 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional Services as assigned</td>
<td>May-June 2018</td>
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