



WEST CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Request for Proposal (RFP) for Strategic Planning Services
West Chicago Public Library District, West Chicago, Illinois

Issued: July 1, 2026

Submittals Due: 5:00 p.m. CST, August 17, 2026

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees of the West Chicago Public Library District (WCPLD) is seeking proposals to retain the services of a qualified individual or firm to assist in the facilitation of a strategic planning process to produce a five-year planning document.

BACKGROUND

The West Chicago Public Library District is located 30 miles from downtown Chicago in DuPage County. The District serves a population of 28,928 residents. According to Census data, the population of West Chicago is comprised of approximately 48 percent Latino or Hispanic; 39 percent White; 10 percent Asian; and 3 percent Black. Half of all households speak another language other than English at home. For a fuller understanding of West Chicago, please visit the [Community Profile](https://westchicago.org/community-profile/) page on the City's website: <https://westchicago.org/community-profile/>.

Below is a snapshot of some key library indicators from the Illinois Public Library Annual Report (IPLAR) during the previous fiscal year:

- Number of employees: 32
- Number of registered Users: 8,812
- Number of programs (all): 626
- Attendance at programs (all): 12,900
- Study room usage: 2,008
- Number of library visits: 64,054
- Checkouts physical & digital: 156,603

The Library's current strategic plan expired in 2025. Much of what was included in the strategic plan was achieved, however renovations and redesign of spaces was not realized. The WCPLD will be seeking to prioritize space utilization through renovations and/or expansion in the next strategic plan in addition to improving access to materials and services for residents.

The current strategic plan prioritized the following goals:

1. Increase access
2. Strengthen outreach efforts
3. Improve space utilization

The next strategic plan will build on our current accomplishments and guide the Library's direction and focus over the next five years and re-evaluate the library's vision and mission statements.

Current Vision Statement: To become a leader of community engagement in West Chicago.

Current Mission Statement: To make the Library resources known and accessible to everyone.

SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant that will lead the Library through a comprehensive strategic planning process, including community and stakeholder engagement, organizational assessment, and development of a five-year strategic plan. The process will result in a living, actionable document that the Library can use to guide decisions, track progress, and adapt to changing conditions.

Discovery & Assessment

The consultant will:

- Conduct a thorough assessment of the Library's internal and external environments
- Perform research to identify current users, non-users, stakeholders, and community partners to determine service priorities, goals, objectives, and activities that meet short and long-term community expectations
- Develop an up-to-date community profile and identify key market segments within the community
- Design and administer a multi-method stakeholder engagement process that will include planning meetings with the Board, management, and staff; focus groups and public input sessions; paper and online surveys (structured for ongoing annual use); and phone or in-person interviews
- Propose the full engagement methodology in the RFP response

Deliverables:

1. Community profile and stakeholder analysis
2. Summary of engagement findings (needs, wants, gaps, and opportunities)
3. Surveys suitable for annual reuse
4. Provide a written status update to the Library Board

Strategic Plan Development

The consultant will:

- Facilitate development of the Library's strategic direction, based upon community research
- Re-evaluate and revise, as warranted, the vision and mission statements
- Create core values statements
- Develop a five-year strategic plan that clearly outlines initiatives, priorities, and important milestones
- Make recommendations for improving existing and new services aligned with identified priorities
- Identify public library best practices and key industry trends
- Provide an assessment tool for regular review and adjustment that is responsive to economic, demographic, or political changes

Deliverables:

1. Revised or affirmed vision and mission statements with documented rationale
2. Values statements with documented rationale
3. Prioritized goals and measurable objectives
4. Five-year strategic plan with implementation timeline and milestones
5. Scalable assessment and evaluation tools for ongoing plan monitoring
6. Provide a written status update to the Library Board

Documentation and Presentation

The consultant will:

- Produce a final strategic planning document that is clear, adaptable, and easy to review regularly; the document should allow staff and leadership to track and measure progress against goals and objectives over time
- Present a completed strategic plan to the Library Board of Trustees, staff, and public

Deliverables:

1. Final strategic plan document (format to be specified by the Library)
2. Progress tracking tool or template
3. Presentation sessions of the final strategic plan to the Board, staff, and public
4. Provide a written status update to the Library Board

PROJECT TIMELINE

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| ➤ Request for Proposal issued: | July 1, 2026 |
| ➤ Deadline for questions or clarifications about the proposal: | August 10, 2026 |
| ➤ Deadline for submitting proposals via email: | August 17, 2026 |
| ➤ Interview selected consultants (no later than): | September 18, 2026 |
| ➤ Selection of Finalist | September 28, 2026 |
| ➤ Notification of contract award (anticipated): | September 29, 2026 |
| ➤ Strategic planning process begins: | October 2026 |
| ➤ Draft plan and executive summary submitted to the Library
Director four weeks in advance of the final deliverable | February 22, 2027 |
| ➤ Final deliverable to be presented in-person at the March :
2027 board meeting | March 22, 2027 |

WCPLD RESPONSIBILITIES

- Coordination and logistics for internal and external meetings
- Access to library data
- Dissemination of consultation materials
- Public communications relating to project progress

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

1. **Cover Letter:** A brief description of the firm or individual, including name, address, telephone number, and email address of the principal contact person.
2. **Executive Summary:** A summary of the highlights of the proposal, not to exceed one page in length, conveying the consultant's understanding of the purpose and expected outcomes of the project.
3. **Key Personnel:** A list of key personnel who would be involved in the process and their relevant experience and expertise. If the consultant plans to contract with a third-party vendor to conduct any portion of the community research, identify which firm(s) you plan to use.
4. **Qualifications and Experience:** A summary of the consulting firm's qualifications and relevant experience, with particular attention to prior strategic planning work with public libraries or similar public-sector organizations.
5. **Work Plan:** A description of the proposed methodology, tasks, and timeline, including the estimated total amount of time that would be spent on the project. The work plan should clearly correspond to the three phases outlined in the Scope of Work.
6. **Exclusions:** Note any parts of the scope of work that are beyond the firm's or consultant's expertise.

7. **Schedule of Costs:** An itemized schedule of costs, including consulting fees, supplies, the number of on-site visits, cost per trip, and any other costs associated with the planning process.
 - Costs for data gathering and analysis (community research component) must be listed as a separate line item. If subcontractors are used, their costs must also be identified separately.
8. **References:** Contact information for three (3) organizations for which the consultant has provided strategic planning services. At least one reference from a public library is preferred.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be reviewed in accordance with the following criteria:

- Responsiveness of the written proposal to the purpose and scope of the project
- Demonstrated knowledge, skills, and experience of the consultant or firm in conducting strategic planning projects in service entities of similar size and scope
- Quality and feasibility of the proposed methodology and timeline for carrying out tasks in the scope of work
- Proposed cost to complete all tasks included in the scope of work and the creation of the five-year strategic plan
- Ability to meet deadlines and operate within budget (references)
- Positive experience and success in strategic planning (references)
- Other relevant professional experience, skills, and proficiencies

SELECTION CONDITIONS

Proposals will be subject to the following conditions:

- WCPLD reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this RFP
- WCPLD 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
- In cases of disputes over differences of opinions as to the services in the proposal, the decision of WCPLD shall be final
- No Library Trustee or employee shall have a financial interest in this proposal
- WCPLD 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

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

- Proposals are due by **August 17, 2026 by 5:00 p.m. CST** and shall be delivered by hand, U.S. mail, or courier to: **West Chicago Public Library District, ATTN: Benjamin R. Weseloh, Library Director, 118 W. Washington St., West Chicago, IL 60185** or emailed to bweseloh@wcpld.info; the entire proposal must be delivered or emailed and clearly marked **“Strategic Planning Services Proposal”**
- Submissions must include two (2) hard copies and one (1) digital copy
- All costs associated with the preparation and delivery of a proposal will be borne by the individual/firm
- Proposals received after the deadline will be rejected
- Inquiries must be made via email to bweseloh@wcpld.info and will be addressed within five (5) business days