



**TO:** Appleton Public Library Board  
**FROM:** Colleen Rortvedt, Library Director  
**DATE:** December 9, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Request Approval to Solicit Proposals for 2026 Strategic Planning Process

---

The Appleton Public Library (APL) is seeking to update its strategic plan. APL's current framework served the library well during the prolonged period of planning for the new library building. Now that the building project is complete, APL needs to develop a plan that will serve as a clear, actionable guide for APL's future direction, communication, and service to the community.

### **Scope of work**

The consultant selected will be responsible for designing and guiding a participatory planning process that engages staff, trustees, community partners, and the public. This process will utilize a mix of engagement methods, including in-person and asynchronous methods such as surveys, focus groups, workshops, and interviews. A key step in the process involves assessing the existing "hub and spoke" strategic framework to determine whether revisions are appropriate. The resulting deliverables will include a draft and final five-year strategic plan, stakeholder engagement reports, and presentations to the Library Board and community stakeholders.

### **Timeline**

This project is anticipated to follow the following timeline:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
RFP issued	Monday, January 5, 2026
Proposal submission deadline	Thursday, February 12, 2026 by noon central time
Consultant interviews	The week of February 23, 2026
Final recommendation to board	Tuesday, March 17, 2026
Project start	April 1, 2026
Project completion	November 2026

## **Budget**

The budget for this project will be determined upon receipt of proposals and the subsequent selection of the top consultant. The RFP requires all proposals to include an itemized cost estimate, covering fees, expenses, and costs associated with the optional implementation session. The submitted proposals will be evaluated based on criteria including the demonstrated experience and qualifications of the consultant, the feasibility of the proposed approach, and the cost-effectiveness of the proposal. Once a consultant is selected, we will present the full contract amount, including the proposed budget, for the Board's final approval. Funding will come from the library's 2026 Friends grant allocation.

We request permission to move forward with issuing the RFP to meet the proposed timeline.