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October 26, 2021

Sarah Muench, Library Director
Elm Grove Public Library
13600 Juneau Boulevard
Elm Grove, WI 53122

Dear Sarah,

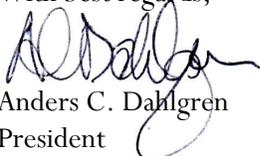
I am pleased to submit, on behalf of my company, Library Planning Associates, Inc., a proposal for services in response to the RFP recently issued by the Elm Grove Public Library. I look forward to your review of this proposal, and welcome any questions you may have or clarifications you may need. The proposal addresses the topics called out in the RFP. If there is any additional material you might need or clarification of anything in this presentation, don't hesitate to get in touch.

The RFP calls for a Facilities Assessment. It's important to acknowledge that the essence of a facilities assessment or a library space needs study is not about space per se, but about the services to be offered within that space. I like to quote the noted Chinese architect, Lao Tze (not really: he was a philosopher), who said hundreds of years ago "The reality of a building does not consist of the roof and walls, but the space within." A building is about what goes on inside the building.

Since a library space needs assessment depends on an assessment of the library services to be supported within, I will contend that the assessment needs to be completed by someone trained and qualified to assess *library services*. To be blunt, by a librarian. As we discussed by phone recently, over the last generation or so, our vocabulary has become loose, our usage less precise. Twenty, thirty years ago, a "library consultant" was a *librarian* consultant. More recently, in part because there's no accreditation needed to practice as a library consultant, others adopted that label – architects, interior designers, furniture vendors. And the fact is, these various practitioners come at a space needs study like this each from their own perspective, with different training, which typically does *not* involve a librarian's expertise. In reviewing responses to the Library's RFP, you may find yourself comparing responses from *all* of these different vectors, which is truly a comparison of apples and oranges. Or pineapples and strawberries, take your pick. I urge you to think carefully about the qualifications that are needed to address the questions at hand.

With that, I'll get down off my soapbox and look forward to your review of this proposal and the others you receive.

With best regards,


Anders C. Dahlgren
President