REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Remodeling Feasibility Study

For

Wright County Courts

January 2016

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SECTION I – GENERAL INFORMATION

Request for Proposals (RFP) Notice

Wright County is soliciting Proposals from qualified firms to provide space planning and architectural design services. Firms with relevant design experience are encouraged to apply. Consideration will be limited to firms which have demonstrated successful experience in the space planning and design of facilities of a similar scope for a public sector owner.

Desirable qualifications include:

- Recent relevant experience in the design and layout of Courtrooms and Courts Facilities including use of current technologies
- Expertise in developing creative and cost effective solutions for the repurposing of existing facilities

All information, including any forthcoming addenda is available on the Wright County website: . http://www.co.wright.mn.us/131/1544/Administration

The County may choose one or more qualified firms for the scope of work outlined in this document. The County is interested in obtaining services from the most responsive, responsible firm(s) who provide the highest value for the lowest cost. All Request for Proposals submitted shall be clearly identified as the "Remodeling Feasibility for Wright County Courts". Two unbound signed copies of your response documents and one electronic copy in .jpg format should be delivered to the County by 4:00 CST on February 17th, 2016 at the following address:

Wright County Administration

ATTN: Lee Kelly, County Coordinator

10 2nd Street NW

Buffalo, MN 55313

Overview and Background

COURTHOUSE HISTORY

The Wright County Government Center which houses the District Court was built in the 1950's. In 1959, Wright County had a county court judge, a district court judge and a probate judge, with three courtrooms. After unification of the district and county courts and an increase in judges from three to four, courtrooms three, four and five were added during a remodel of the entire building in 1990. In 2005, two new judgeships were created for Wright County bringing the total to the current six. A vending machine room in an area not contiguous with the other courtrooms was converted into a sixth courtroom and other space was remodeled to accommodate chambers for the additional judges.

Shortly after the new judgeships were added, the County planned for and built a new jail facility on Braddock Avenue. The long term plan for the courthouse was to build contiguous to the Braddock Avenue jail facility and the jail plan anticipated this future building. However, due to the economic downturn beginning in 2008, no further plans were made to build the new courthouse.

The footprint (25,600 sq. ft.) of the Court's operations has remained the same since 2005. Two of the courtrooms have not been updated in any significant manner since they opened in 1959. Three of the courtrooms have not been updated in any significant manner since they opened in 1990.

The County Attorney's Office and the Court Services department also moved into the present space after the 1990 remodel of the building. Both departments have unmet space needs and no room for expansion.

DEFICIENCIES IN CURRENT COURT SPACE

Safety

The primary concern is the safety of staff and the public who are appearing or participating in court. By definition the Court's work frequently involves individuals in the worst moments of their lives; they can be assaultive, combative, and difficult at times. One critical safety issue stems from the judicial area behind the courtrooms. Currently the judicial hallway is the only hallway available for transporting prisoners as well as jurors, court administration staff, judicial staff, and others such as attorneys, parties, and law enforcement. The co-mingling of confined prisoners, jurors, judges, court personnel, attorneys, and others needs to be addressed. The March 2014 security assessment of the Wright County Courthouse concluded that this building is not appropriately designed or sized to provide adequate and secure court space.

A significant safety concern arises due to the size of courtrooms 3, 4, and 6 as well as the irregular shape of courtroom 6. Recent security incidents in the smaller courtrooms have emphasized the need to address the inadequacy of these courtrooms. The obstructed pathways and cramped space inhibit effective and rapid containment of security threats. Equally concerning is the fact that frequently the Courts have hearings where not all the parties have a place at the counsel tables due to the small courtroom size. More importantly, Courts frequently are required to have parties who have restraining orders against each other sitting in the small courtrooms, less than 6 feet apart. This is inappropriate and dangerous.

These courtrooms are not only the smallest courtrooms in our courthouse; they are the smallest courtrooms in the entire Tenth Judicial District. The Courts regularly exceed the fire code occupancy limits for the space in order to conduct their business. The 2015 Space Study of the Wright County Courthouse conducted by the National Center for State Courts concluded that when the national standards for courthouse requirements are applied, the District Court and ancillary services require twice the square footage currently available to have adequate space for the Court's present day needs, without planning for any anticipated growth.

Technology

Given the age of the courthouse, it is not surprising that the existing infrastructure is also inadequate to support technology that is regularly used in court. Technology has changed dramatically since 1959, since 1990 and even over the last ten years. Courtroom participants and attorneys need to use technology during proceedings. The Courts now generate orders in the courtroom in many proceedings and provide copies and notices before people leave court. During trials and evidentiary matters, attorneys and parties have significant issues with publishing electronic evidence. Not only are the sight lines problematic, the absence of technology infrastructure requires multiple cords to be run on the floor throughout the courtrooms. In at least two different trials, the Courts have had individuals trip and fall on the cords, creating potential liability for Wright County. The Courts need to be able to use technology in courtrooms and are not able to effectively and safely do so.

The Minnesota Judicial Branch is in the process of implementing electronic filing and information management in all courts across the state, which requires significant electronic storage and connectivity, as well as space design which permits use of electronic information for each transaction or hearing. By July 1, 2016, the Courts will no longer be utilizing paper files, but instead will be conducting business without paper. None of the current courtrooms have adequate size benches or clerk stations to accommodate the necessary equipment. Many of the benches have inadequate sightlines even without the monitors that are necessary for the court to conduct proceedings without paper files. The courtrooms are not configured or designed to permit routine use of the necessary equipment by judges, court staff, court reporters, jurors, lawyers and litigants. On some calendars, there is a need to have two court

administration staff present, but no space exists for the staff, much less the necessary equipment. The court administrator's office also lacks space for necessary equipment and storage.

Accessibility

Another major area of concern is the accessibility of the courts. Individuals in wheelchairs, whether parties, staff, attorneys, jurors or the public, have significant difficulty accessing our courtrooms and court administration. The Courts must provide court services for all citizens, not just able-bodied citizens.

Courtroom needs

Significant space problems also occur when multiple trials are going. The jury space is not adequately sized; the Courts have also had problems with jurors becoming claustrophobic due to the tight quarters. More importantly, there are significant sound transmission problems that limit what courtrooms and facilities can be utilized when jurors are present. The Courts have developed a complicated calendaring plan to work around the facility challenges.

Other

There are many other facility problems including significant HVAC problems, the need for conference room space, the unmet statutory requirement for a separate victim/witness waiting room, the need for additional courtrooms that can accommodate jury trials, acoustical problems in the present courtrooms, the significant unevenness of the floors, etc. While not an exhaustive list, the current space has significant challenges which have not been addressed.

The purpose of the present RFP is to determine cost effective ways of dealing with these significant problems.

Project Requirements and Statement of Work

Wright County (hereinafter "County") seeks to address the facility needs of the Wright County District Court (hereinafter "Courts") while seeking the most cost effective manner of doing so. Since the time the Wright County Jail was planned and built, the long term courthouse plan was to also build a new courthouse at the jail location. Since the new jail opened on Braddock Avenue in Buffalo, incarcerated individuals have been transported back and forth to the current courthouse located in downtown Buffalo. The economic downturn in 2008 and subsequent years has necessarily delayed the timeline for the new courthouse. Recognizing the need to be fiscally responsible with public tax dollars, the Courts have previously agreed to delay necessary improvements to the facilities. However at this time, the facility needs have become so significant that further delay is not an option. The Courts can no longer continue doing the necessary and required business of the courts in the present facility in its current state (see

background information section.) Immediate modifications are necessary to address the court needs, even if the County were to begin building a courthouse now.

Additionally, the Court Services department and the County Attorney's Office will eventually be located at the new building, but have presently maximized the use of their present space and also have facility needs that are unmet.

The County seeks to determine if it is more cost effective to:

Option 1) Make improvements to the existing courthouse and delay building of a new courthouse for approximately 8-10 years;

Option 2) Make improvements to the existing courthouse and delay building of a new courthouse for approximately 3-4 years; or

Option 3) Begin building a new courthouse within the next 2 years;

It is the County's desire, if feasible, to avoid building a new facility for up to 10 years.

In order to make this determination, the county seeks proposals from an architectural firm with significant background in designing and remodeling courthouse space to analyze and develop a plan for each of the three options. Each option must include the following:

- The overall estimated cost including any costs associated with the relocation of staff or operations
- Description of any impact on the users of court facilities such as the inability to use present space due to remodeling
- Analysis of the ability of the HVAC, electrical and plumbing of the present courthouse to support the necessary remodeling/improvements
- Remodeling/improvement staging plan including where court will be held while improvements are made
- The estimated time for completing each of the options
- A rough estimate of the cost to return the area to general office space
- Detailed design documents approved by both the County and the Courts

Wright County recognizes not all improvements listed will be economically practical. It is the responsibility of the vendor to determine the practicality of listed items based on their feasibility and necessity.

The plan for each option must include a minimum of the following improvements:

<u>Option 1: Delay Building for 8-10 years</u>

1. All items included in Options 1 & 2
2. 2 additional jury trial courtrooms (total of 5)
3. 1 Magistrate courtroom & Chambers
4. ADA Compliance/Wheelchair accessibility in all courtrooms
5. Secured Parking Garage
6. Self Help Center Space
7. Space (Rental) for Department of Corrections
8. Modification for Specialty Courts (Conference Room +)
9. Large Shared Conference room
10. Conference room in secured space for court admin/judicial staff
11. Additional Office space
    i. County Attorney
    ii. Court Admin
    iii. Court Services

Option 2: Delay Building for 3-4 years

1. Items under Option 1
2. Replace Courtrooms 3, 4, & 6
3. Added Hearing Room for Magistrate
4. Judicial Access to each courtroom from a secure judicial corridor
5. Accessibility for Individuals in wheelchairs in at least one jury trial courtroom and at least two additional courtrooms
6. Jury Trial Courtrooms - Minimum of 3 Jury trial Courtrooms
    i. separate from detention courtroom
    ii. equipped for technology
    iii. adequate jury deliberation space
    iv. judicial access from secure corridor
7. Eliminate use of same hallway for jurors, prisoners, judges & staff (security issue)

8. Address acoustical issues
    i. Sound vestibules for courtrooms
    ii. Improved acoustics inside courtrooms & adequate sound system
9. Adequate size jury assembly room
10. Secured Counter area for Court Admin
11. Additional Office Space for Court Admin
12. Room for eCourt training (tech equipped – sufficient outlets & connections to network)
13. Additional Conference Rooms for attorney client meetings & mediation/negotiations
14. Court Services inside secured portion of courthouse
15. Adequate UA collection/testing room which addresses staff safety
16. Adequate interview rooms for court services which address staff safety
17. EHM/Alcohol Monitoring equipment & connection room which addresses staff safety
18. Victim/Witness waiting room near courts (required by statute)
19. Additional office space for Court services (1-2 agents + 1 support staff)
20. Additional office space for County Attorney
    i. Clerical Space
    ii. Office w/door for Office Manager
    iii. Small conference room
    iv. Additional office space for attorney/paralegal staff as added

<u>Option 3: Build a New Courthouse beginning in 2 years</u>

1. Modification of the benches in Courtrooms 1, 2, and 5
    i) Stations for two court clerks
    ii) Room for double monitors on clerk stations & bench in courtrooms
    iii) Court Reporters incorporated into bench area

2. Storage Space for Court Administration

Instructions To Interested Parties

Key Dates

Release RFP	01/06/2016
Pre-bid Meeting	01/25/2016
Response Deadline	02/17/2016
Quote Evaluation	02/24/2016

The purpose of the pre-bid meeting is to review the project with prospective bidders and answer their questions. Any answers provided after the meeting will be distributed via e-mail to all in attendance. A walk through of the facilities will be provided.

The purpose of the Request for Proposals is to demonstrate the qualifications, service level, cost of services, competence, and capacity of the firms seeking to become the selected firm for the Remodeling Feasibility Study for Wright County Courts.

Firms should provide the following information in their qualifications:

a. Firm History and Experience:

    1. Brief history of your firm including size and any specialty areas
    2. Background company data, including financial references
    3. Particular expertise and involvement in the areas of: Courthouse and Courts Design, Technology integration, Architectural, Space Planning, and Facilities industry
    4. County experience
    5. Other Public Sector experience

b. Qualifications:

    1. Description of your service philosophy, program structure, and pricing
    2. Brief introduction of the account team, by name with specific roles, qualifications and experience, and distribution of responsibilities including support capabilities
    3. Current use of technology, methodology and approach to this project, innovation, and creativity with Space Plan studies and facilities renovations
    4. Action-plan and timetable for assuming responsibilities on how to contain project costs
    5. Detail of services that will be provided to the County

6. Expected responsibilities of person designated to serve as lead contact for the County

c. References:

1. List of counties or public sector entities you represent and for what type of service, including the contact names and telephone numbers
2. Contact information of three (3) clients including the names and telephone numbers in the State of Minnesota with whom you have had a working relationship (Preferably, the references should be governmental.)

d. Conflict of Interest:

1. Disclose any conflicts or perceived conflicts of interest
2. Identify what procedures your firm uses to identify and resolve conflicts of interest

e. Proposed Fee for Services:

1. Explanation of compensation plans for your firm under this solicitation including all services to be included in that fee.
2. List any additional service options as well as the fee structure involved.

f. Copies of the following items:

1. Company and Fee Statement of Record/Certification Statement
2. All insurance coverage certificates meeting the following:

General liability coverage

- $1,000,000 Each Occurrence
- $2,000,000 General Aggregate
- $ 1,000,000 Products and Completed Operations Aggregate

Workers Compensation and Employer's Liability Coverage

- Bodily Injury by Accident: $500,000 each accident
- Bodily Injury by Disease: $500,000 each employee
- Bodily Injury by Accident: $500,000 policy limit

Professional Liability Coverage:

- $2,000,000 per Wrongful act or Occurrence

- $2,000,000 Aggregate

Variations on insurance requirements may be approved based on the County's assessment of risk.

g. List of any additional resources or subcontractors considered with their qualifications

Supplemental Information

In addition to information provided to the specifics herein, the bidder is encouraged to provide any information that is considered to be of value to the County and Courts.

Evaluation Criteria

The County will evaluate proposals based on the needs of the County. The following criteria will be used in evaluating each of the firms' responses:

1. Project Understanding
2. Ability to interpret and deliver service delivery recommendations
3. Strength of references, including similar work
4. Competitive pricing
5. Experience and Qualifications

Contact information

Wright County Administration

ATTN: Lee Kelly, County Coordinator

10 2nd Street NW

Buffalo, MN 55313

Lee.Kelly@co.wright.mn.us

General

1. Failure to provide any of the requested information may result in rejection of your proposal.
2. Wright County Reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submitted proposals.