



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Library Hires Architect to Conduct Feasibility Study

Lake Forest, IL – March 14, 2018 | The Lake Forest Library Board of Trustees voted Tuesday, March 13, to retain the services of Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, Inc. (HGA) to conduct a feasibility study exploring possible renovations and improvements to the Library building to benefit Library patrons and the Lake Forest community.

HGA Architects and Engineers is a nationally ranked, full-service architecture, engineering, and planning firm with offices coast-to-coast. A blended team from their Milwaukee and Minneapolis offices will be working with the Library. The team includes a historic preservation specialist.

Community feedback from the Library's 2017 Community Needs Assessment included desires for improved access to the building, growth of the collection, expansion of the teen area, and the creation of space for study and small meeting rooms. Residents appreciate the history and "magnificence" of the Library building, acknowledging that "keeping the physical and interior integrity" of the building is important, but "libraries should now be centers of teaching people." HGA will be using the community feedback and the Library's 2017–19 Strategic Plan as a blueprint throughout the design process. They look forward to helping us imbue our historic structure with contemporary library programming.

"We're very excited to be taking this next step in the life of the Library," Library Board President Todd Puch said. "HGA's approach to the design process to offer 'options as questions' is a good fit for Lake Forest and its engaged residents who care a lot about the Library building and enhancing available services and resources."

The feasibility study is a first step in ensuring the longevity of the structure. It will be a holistic effort with ongoing collaboration between HGA, the Library Board, Director, staff, City officials, and the Lake Forest community, with the goal of improving the user experience and responding to emerging service demands and future needs and interests of the community. The feasibility study is limited to the planning phase and schematic design phase with a focus on:

- Addressing existing structural issues
- Redesigning interior spaces to be more flexible, multi-functional, and ADA compliant
- Reenvisioning patron access and use
- Designing a teen space
- Assessing the need for small group meeting spaces
- Updating furnishings and shelving
- Increasing safety and security in all spaces
- Anticipating necessary capital improvements and making recommendations for undertaking these improvements

The iterative and interactive design process culminates in a master plan that will serve as a roadmap and living document to guide decisions as the building and community needs continue to evolve.



The Library Board looks forward to ushering this historically significant building into the 21st century so that it continues to be reflective of the Library's mission: inspiring lifelong learning, promoting the free and respectful exchange of ideas, and building community.

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