



Request for Proposals:  
**Strategic Planning Consultant**

**Deadline for Proposals:**  
**Rolling**

# Request for Proposals

## I. Objectives

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Recreation and Fitness Resources (RFR) solicits proposals from consultants committed to undertaking a strategic planning process that identifies and sets priorities, directs and manages programmatic and financial growth, and guides the development of staff and infrastructure. Proposals are evaluated on a rolling basis. We expect the strategic planning process to take place in the fall of 2022 or winter 2022/2023, depending on funding.

## II. Organizational Summary

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**History:** Recreation and Fitness Resources (RFR) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit formed in 2006 to manage the Recreation Center. The School District of Bayfield owns the facility building. RFR leases the facility for \$1 per year. Prior to the formation of RFR, the Bayfield School District operated and financed the Center. Management by the school district cost taxpayers \$150,000 per year, causing the Recreation Center to become a politically unpopular issue and nearly resulted in its closing. In response, a group of concerned citizens united to save the Recreation Center by creating RFR as a non-profit entity that took over operations in 2006. RFR boosted Recreation Center use and membership by 40%, implemented "green" practices to cut the facility's energy use by 50%, created new fundraisers, raised money, and wrote grants to fund a successful organization to date. Not surprisingly, RFR faced numerous operational, staffing and decision making challenges in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At this time, the organization remains a strong, viable, community centered resource that is poised to undertake strategic planning and plan for its future in the community.

**Mission:** Recreation and Fitness Resources (RFR) is rooted in Bayfield, Wisconsin and provides and supports affordable access to facilities, programs, classes, and events that promote health, activity, and fun. RFR believes when individuals are healthy and active, our community is healthy and active. Connecting our community members to affordable recreation and fitness programs in the Bayfield area is at the heart of what we do.

**Resources** The Recreation Center houses a racquetball court, fitness center, community room, and aquatic facility with a full-size pool, hot tub and sauna. Outside areas include a small skate park and basketball court. RFR operates the Bayfield Recreation Center, Aspire Martial Arts, North Coast Community Sailing, Point to La Pointe Open Water Swim, the Bayfield Polar Plunge and Winter Festival, Silver Sneakers for Seniors, Ballroom Dancing, and a variety of other programs, classes, and events.

Since 1986 the Bayfield Recreation Center has been a true community center serving all ages in a broad rural region northern Wisconsin, including Bayfield, Ashland and Iron Counties. Fitness center options in this area are extremely limited. The nearest public pool is well over an hour's drive away from RFR.

**Communities Served:** RFR serves the Chequamegon Bay area, from Bad River and Ashland to Bayfield, Red Cliff and Cornucopia. These communities racially, socially and economically diverse. A common denominator is the need for a sense of community and for maintaining physical health and well-being. RFR fills an important role in this regard.

The counties served by RFR have a higher percentage of families living below the poverty level when compared to other counties in the state: 15.7% in Ashland County, 11.6% in Bayfield County; and 11.3% in Iron County (datausa.io). Located just three miles away from Red Cliff Reservation and 33 miles by road from the Bad River Reservation, RFR strives to work closely with these Native American communities to foster easy access to our facilities and programs for all ages. Serving seniors is also a priority due to the large percentage of elderly and aging citizens in the area.

While our year-round rural populations are our primary focus, the influx of both short term and long term visitors during the warmer seasons creates another key constituency for RFR to respond to, as well as leverage for financial and community support.

The statistics below show the geographic distribution of the 641 memberships in 2019, pre-COVID-19 pandemic. The data reflects that people travel substantial distances to use the RFR resources. It also reveals the potential to expand memberships and participation in programs and facility use. In particular, outreach to the larger Ashland and Washburn communities are important target markets.

- Ashland - 121 memberships (281 people) = 19%
- Bayfield (includes Red Cliff) - 309 memberships (673 people) = 48%
- Cornucopia - 14 memberships (29 people) = 2%
- Herbster - 8 memberships (8 people) = 1%
- La Pointe - 16 memberships (29 people) = 2%
- Washburn - 173 memberships (431 people) = 27%

**Staffing and Operations:** RFR strives to be open 7 days and over 80 hours per week, Covid has reduced this to 6 days and 70 hours per week. Current operations are carried out by 3 full-time and 10-20 part-time staff (including lifeguards), plus 10-20 seasonal staff. Additionally, the 8-person Board of Directors is actively engaged in supporting operations, organizational development, and community relations. RFR depends on countless volunteers for all of its offerings. The Point to LaPointe swim would not occur without the assistance of well over 75 volunteers. Volunteers maintain the youth sailing school's fleet of over 30 boats. The storage and beachfront property are graciously donated by the City of Washburn.

## **Our Program Offerings in 2019 (Pre-Pandemic)**

### **Aquatics**

- Aqua Fit
- Home School Swim
- Logrolling with Instruction
- Open Kayaking with Instruction
- Parent and Child Swim Lessons
- Red Cross Swim Lessons
- Water Polo with Instruction

### **Recreation**

- Aspire Martial Arts (TaeKwonDo)
- Ballroom Dancing

- Kids Night Out
- Summer Adventurers Youth Programming
- Mah Jong
- Sailing Classes
- Silver Sneakers (Senior specific)

### **School Groups**

- Classroom Incentive Parties
- Physical Education K-12 Pool Use - Swimming Lessons for Grades 1-6
- Physical Education 9-12 Fitness Room Use
- Student Athletes' Fitness Room Use
- Troller After School Program

**Our Partners:** The Bayfield Rec Center works with Bayfield, South Shore, Washburn and Ashland School Districts, Family Forum, Red Cliff Early Childhood Center, Northland College, CORE Community Resources, the Red Cliff Boys and Girls Club, La Pointe Recreation, Ashland County SPARK, Bayfield and Ashland County Human Services Departments to provide educational and recreational opportunities. RFR has a number of other recreation providers in the region to leverage and complement one another. These include Mt. Ashwabay Outdoor Education Foundation, Bayfield Parks and Recreation, Bayfield Area Trails, Ashland Parks and Recreation Department, and CAMBA.

**Need-based Financial Assistance:** RFR provides need-based financial assistance for memberships, classes and programs. In the 2018 budget year RFR funded \$5983.21 of financial assistance for over 50 youth. In 2017 RFR 12 % of the 738 individual and family memberships received some level of financial assistance. Much of this assistance is to support youth participation in programs. Through this participation, individuals will develop knowledge and skills related to physical and mental health and fitness; physical and mental discipline and focus; teamwork and fair play; self-respect; and being part of a healthy community. These are life skills that enable higher probability for success for participating individuals. These skills and successes can also be passed on to younger siblings and neighbors, thereby instilling motivation and hope to pursue a healthy and active lifestyle. Additionally, research shows that when youth have the opportunity to expend energy through physical activity, they are more able to focus on academic and intellectual activities.

### **III. Deliverables**

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RFR Executive Director, Program Director, and select staff and Board will collaborate with consultants to conduct an organizational review and planning process. The process will begin winter 2022, funding dependent, with an expected completion date of spring 2022.

**The process will include several distinct components:**

- An evaluation of RFR’s current programs, conducted through external and internal reviews of organizational infrastructure, programs and relationships through feedback from clients, staff, volunteers, and community partners.
- An evaluation of need for additional/new programming, growth, collaborations and partnerships by soliciting feedback from staff, community members, clients, other non-profit organizations, schools and others to be identified in the pre-planning process.
- Synthesis of evaluation into a brief vision, mission, and goals statement, to guide RFR for the following five years.
- Extrapolation of vision, mission, and goals into a strategic plan, response plan for emerging challenges and opportunities, and statement of organizational and board culture.
- Presentation of strategic plan to board, staff, and possibly the broader community.

**Elements of the strategic plan document will include:**

- Vision statement, supported by the evaluation of RFR’s constituency needs.
- Mission statement, in pursuit of the vision and supported by evaluation of need.
- Goals in support of the mission, which will be supported by distinct strategies and rationales.
- Specific strategies to meet the goals, addressing RFR’s strengths and intended growth areas.
- Timeline for implementing strategies and pursuing and implementing goals.
- List of criteria and priorities that hone a strategic, rapid response to developing opportunities or challenges.
- Statement of intent and actions regarding organizational culture and board development to guide the conscientious cultivation of board and staff culture.
- Evaluation results collected from the review of RFR’s programs and community need.

**IV. Proposal**

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RFR is soliciting proposals from results-driven and process-oriented professionals who are committed to maximizing the efficacy of nonprofit service providers. Consultants should seek to derive results through a community-based approach that utilizes outreach through RFR’s networks. Experience with recreation center facilities, indoor and outdoor recreation programs, small communities, the general geographic area, minority communities, and organizations that serve wide ranging age groups preferred.

**Proposal Requirements (not to exceed 10 pages in length):**

<u>Score %</u>	<u>Requirement</u>
0%	Firm name and primary contact for the application ( <u>Name, phone, and email</u> ).
35%	A description of the firm’s experience and the bio(s) of staff assigned to this project (Including <u>relevant experience, qualifications, and experience working with diverse constituencies</u> ).
20%	A description of the scope of project ( <u>Timeline, estimated hours, part-time availability over project period</u> ).
35%	A description of the methods and objectives to be used to achieve the desired result (Including <u>strategies</u> for staff, constituency, and community engagement in the planning process).
10%	Project <u>budget</u> , including hourly rate structure and expected hours.

0%	At least <u>two references</u> who are former nonprofit clients, and, if possible, a <u>work sample</u> .
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## **Evaluation**

RFR will review all proposals submitted by the proposal deadline. Proposal evaluation will be conducted using a scoresheet, and the top proposals will be followed with an interview; decisions will be made based on both. RFR will weigh the experience, competence, approach, recommendations and work samples, cost competitiveness, and timeline of candidates in making decisions.

Please contact Jacob Kaiser by email at [jacob@recreationandfitnessresources.org](mailto:jacob@recreationandfitnessresources.org) with intent to apply. Additionally, consultants are highly encouraged to call or email with any questions, comments, or concerns before applying.

Please submit completed proposals to [jacob@recreationandfitnessresources.org](mailto:jacob@recreationandfitnessresources.org). You will receive confirmation of proposal submission. Up to three consultants will be selected for a final interview spring/summer 2022.