

CITY OF CHESTER REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
Fire Services Assessment and Location and Schedule Study

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

The City of Chester, PA, is seeking assistance from a qualified consultant to submit proposals for a Fire Department Station Assessment, Location and Staffing Study. The consultant shall be capable of assisting with a review and analysis of the current and future fire services delivery, including response times, staffing complement, and fire fighter shift scheduling for the City of Chester Fire Department, as compared to appropriate standards.

The intent of this request for proposal is to retain a consultant to provide the City with appropriate information on which to make determinations regarding the potential consolidation of Fire Department operations into one location within the next few years and regarding the optimum shift schedule for Fire Fighters.

Sealed envelopes marked with the designation “City of Chester Fire Services Assessment and Location and Schedule Study” and containing four (4) paper copies and a PDF copy saved on a CD or USB flash drive must be postmarked by **9:30 AM, January 15, 2020**, and addressed to:

Candice Thompson
City of Chester, City Hall
1 Fourth Street
Chester, PA 19013

Proposals submitted after that time and date or proposals that are non-responsive to the requirements of this RFP will not be considered.

Request for Proposals (RFP) will be posted on www.chestercity.com. Questions concerning the RFP must be made by 4:00 PM, January 10, 2020. Please email questions to Fire Commissioner William Rigby, at wrigby@chestercity.com by the date set forth herein.

II. PROJECT OVERVIEW

A. Purpose

The City of Chester entered the Act 47 program in 1995. It adopted its original Recovery Plan in 1996, and amendments in 2006, 2013 and 2016. In 2018, the City adopted a 3-year Exit Plan designed to assist the City in leaving the Act 47 Program. The Exit Plan presents a series of recommendations to address past obligations and the City’s fiscal imbalance, as well as providing the beginnings of an economic development strategy to address several of the underlying causes of the City’s financial distress and support the expansion of the local economy.

Throughout the Act 47 program, various proposals have been made related to Fire Department operations, mainly in the areas of cost containment and reduction. In the 2016 Amended Recovery Plan and the 2018 Exit Plan, however, the Act 47 Coordinator recommended that the City explore

whether the existing Fire Department operations, which includes two fire stations, could be safely consolidated into one location. To that end, the Act 47 Coordinator recommended that the City commission a review of staffing and response times under the current Department structure, as well as potential staffing and response times under three additional proposed consolidation scenarios. It was recommended that this analysis include a review of actual City data, including population density, historical call figures, city demographic and geographic information, etc. In anticipation of such a study, the International Association of Fire Fighters, the national affiliate of the bargaining unit representing current Fire Department employees, conducted its own study, which concluded that the City should not reduce staff and should continue to maintain both of the current stations from which the Department is dispatched.

The City is interested in an independent analysis of fire service coverage and potential fire company consolidation.

B. Background

The City of Chester is located in the southeast corner of Delaware County. The population of the 4.7 square mile City is about 34,000. Philadelphia is located approximately 9.7 miles to the northeast, and the City of Wilmington, Delaware is located approximately 7.8 miles to the southwest. The City of Chester has direct access to rail lines and major roadways, including Interstates 95 and 476, and the New Jersey Turnpike via the Commodore Barry Bridge (US322). From downtown Chester, Philadelphia International Airport is less than a 15 minute drive.

Chester is incorporated as a third class city and operates pursuant to a Home Rule Charter approved by its citizens. City government is organized with an elected Mayor, who serves as the Chief Executive, and a City Council of five members, one of whom is the Mayor. Council members are elected at large for four-year staggered terms and together form the legislative branch of the City government.

The City provides its citizens with highways and streets, sanitation, health, recreation, planning, zoning, and public improvement services, as well as police and fire protection. In 2018, these local services were supported with a \$54 million General Fund operating budget, \$1.0 million of Special Revenue Funds for legally restricted operating expenses, and \$250,000 of capital project funds.

The Fire Department provides fire protection and prevention services to the City. The Department's mission is to provide fire protection services aimed at minimizing the loss of life and property from fires, explosions, hazardous materials and natural disasters. Along with this mission, it is the Department's goal to establish a comprehensive fire safety education and prevention program designed to meet the diversified needs of the entire community.

The Department's goals include the reduction of the loss of life and damage to property from fire by applying proactive inspection and code enforcement; the protection of the environment from natural and human caused disaster; and the establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive fire safety education and prevention program designed to meet the diversified needs of the entire

community. The Department also strives to provide regional leadership in all areas of fire service issues. The Department initiates required fire investigation services in order to establish the cause and origin of a fire and to provide evidence and support for required litigation. The members of the Department remain aware of local, state, national and global fire service events so that service delivery is always current and relevant to community needs, and can be managed and delivered in a cost-effective manner.

The Department also provides emergency mitigation and management at hazardous materials incidents and, of course, the Department extinguishes all fires within the boundaries of the City of Chester. The Department, upon request by an outside agency and consistent with existing mutual aid agreements, will also assist other departments outside of City limits.

The Chester Fire Department currently has two fire stations: Station 1 (81) located at Third and Tilghman Streets in the City's west end, and Station 2 (82) located in the east end at Fourteenth Street and Providence Avenue. Station 81 houses Suite 81 and Engine 81. Station 82 (Fire Headquarters) houses Engine 82, Tower Ladder 82, and a Battalion Chief's Vehicle (Chester 11). The costs to operate two fire stations include costs associated with each building, staffing for each battalion unit, and staffing requirements for each vehicle.

The Fire Commissioner has indicated that the response time to any location in the City is less than four (4) minutes. Based on this, and in accordance with National Fire Protection Association standard 1720 (which provides for a response time of approximately 9 minutes for an urban area with a population of greater than 1000 residents), it is possible that the Fire Department could maintain an adequate response time from a single location and could, therefore, eliminate one Fire station.

The City has therefore contemplated closing one station and consolidating services out of the remaining station. In the alternative, the City has considered exploring the closure of both Stations 1 and 2, and consolidating services out of one future location to be determined.

C. Project Objectives

As part of this project, the consultant will be asked to assist with the following:

1. Analyze and evaluate, utilizing available GIS and other information, current Fire Department services and response times against appropriate standards.
2. Analyze and evaluate, utilizing available GIS and other information, potential Fire Department response times against appropriate standards if all fire operations were consolidated at Station 1 (Third and Tilghman Streets).
3. Analyze and evaluate, utilizing available GIS and other information, potential Fire Department response times against appropriate standards if all fire operations were consolidated at Station 2 (Fourteenth Street and Providence Avenue).

4. Analyze and evaluate, utilizing available GIS and other information, potential Fire Department response times against NFPA standards if all fire operations were consolidated at a new location.
5. In addition to GIS information, the response time and consolidation analysis should consider:
 - a) Historical call volumes;
 - b) Historical call locations;
 - c) Traffic concerns, including location of railroad tracks and similar facilities;
 - d) Future population growth;
 - e) Changes to City demographic and population statistics;
 - f) Current and future commercial development;
 - g) Mutual aid assistance to neighboring municipalities; and
 - h) Other appropriate variables.
6. Analyze current staffing and scheduling system to determine if service levels could be improved or maintained by implementing a new fire fighter schedule, including consideration of the needs under each of the four future location scenarios.

D. Project Team

The consultant for this project will work with a preset project team. The team includes a representative from the Mayor's Office, Councilman Jacobs (Director of Public Safety), Fire Commissioner Rigby and a representative from the Recovery Coordinator Team.

III. PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK

A. Scope of Work

The scope of work should satisfy the City's objectives stated above and meet the expectations of the Project Team. A final scope of work will be developed by the City and the respondent submitting the selected proposal ("The Project Consultant") following selection.

B. Expected Deliverables

1. The consultant will attend and participate in meetings with appropriate City and Fire Department officials to understand the current operations of the Department.
2. The consultant will request and gather appropriate GIS, historical call volume, and residential and commercial development information necessary to evaluating the facility and staffing needs of the Department.
3. The consultant will develop a draft analysis and report detailing the response times and staffing needs for the Department under the four (4) Fire Department structures set forth in Section II.C. above for review.

4. At the conclusion of the project, the City anticipates the delivery of a graphically rich, full and complete report detailing the response times and staffing needs for the Department under the four (4) Fire Department structures set forth in Section II.C. above.
5. The consultant's analysis and report should be accompanied by appropriate mapping and documentation supporting said analysis.
6. The analysis and report should provide an explanation regarding any conclusions that differ from those provided by the International Fire Fighters Association.
7. At the City's request, the consultant will present the report at one or more public meetings.

C. Anticipated Schedule

The City of Chester anticipates a 3 to 4 month process to complete the assessment and study.

D. Budget

The City of Chester is pursuing grant funding for the purpose of conducting this study. Any contract award associated with this Request for Proposal is contingent upon the availability of funds for the project. If funds are not available, any agreement resulting from this Request for Proposal shall become void and of no force or effect.

IV. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

In the proposal, the consultant shall include a Technical Proposal, a Company Profile, Personnel Qualifications, Comparable Project information, a Proposed Fee, any Additional Information to be considered, and a Signature page. The consultant shall also provide a thorough explanation of how the consultant will develop and provide the deliverables identified in this RFP.

The Responses to this RFP must not be more than twenty (20) pages in length (10 double-sided or 20 single-sided pages) and include the following:

A. Technical Proposal

This section shall consist of:

1. A description of the approach to be taken toward completion of the assessment and report, an explanation of any variances to the proposed scope of work or the deliverables as outlined in the RFP, and any insights into the project gained as a result of developing the proposal;
2. A scope of work that includes steps to be taken, including any products or deliverables resulting from each task;
3. A proposed schedule that indicates project milestones and overall time for completion;
4. Any other information deemed necessary to address the requests of this RFP.

B. Company Profile

This section should state the size of the firm, license number (if any), the type of firm, the firm’s background, and the location and/or office from which the work on this project will be performed. The Company Profile should also identify the consultant’s proposed Project Team Leader.

C. Personnel Qualifications

Project personnel, as applicable, shall be listed, including a description of assignments and responsibilities, a resume of professional experience, an estimate of the time each would devote to this project, and other pertinent information.

D. Comparable Projects

Provide a brief description of the last three (3) comparable projects in progress or completed for municipalities. Include a reference name with current contact information. Where possible, sample assessments shall be provided.

E. Proposed Fee

Describe the allocation of the project budget by task (time, personnel, etc.). Identify the maximum professional fee inclusive of all fees and expenses. The City of Chester shall not be liable for any costs incurred by the consultants in the preparation of the Proposal, nor for costs related to any element of the selection and contract negotiation process.

F. Additional Information

Include in this section any additional information you wish to provide to the City relevant to the analysis.

G. Signature

An individual authorized to bind the proposer to the representations and cost proposals, and to contractually bind the company, must sign the formal response. Include the following: Company name, Authorized signature, Title, Printed name, Phone, Fax, Email, Web address.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

A. Proposal Timetable

The proposed schedule for the RFP process is as follows:

Issue RFP:

Cutoff for written questions:

Summary response to written questions:

Proposals due:

Consultant Interviews:

Contract negotiations:

Deadline extensions will not be granted, and late submittals will not be evaluated.

B. Evaluation of Proposals

The Project Planning Team and others will thoroughly evaluate the merits of each submission. The following criteria (in order of importance) will be used to evaluate proposals:

- Professional qualifications
- Project understanding
- Technical approach
- Cost (value and most experienced people doing the most work for the least cost resulting in the best product). The City anticipates that the project budget will not exceed \$50,000.

C. City Property

All submittals shall become the property of the City of Chester and will not be returned.

D. Acceptance/Rejection of Proposals

The City of Chester reserves the right to reject all proposals submitted, to cancel the solicitation request under this notice, and/or to re-request proposals for this work and service. The City also reserves the right to negotiate terms, including the Proposed Fee, with any selected consultant.

E. Consultant Interviews

Consultants who are deemed most eligible for an interview and oral presentation will be notified of the intended time, date, location and format as determined by the City.

F. Agreement

The City of Chester shall, upon mutually agreeable and acceptable terms and conditions with the successful respondent/consultant, enter into a formal agreement for an agreed upon fee and period of time.

G. Bidder's Ethics and Collusion

1. Collusive Bidding: Any firm that submits more than one proposal in such a manner as to make it appear that one of the proposals submitted is competitive with that of a different proposer, or any two or more firms agree to fix their respective proposals in such a manner as to be awarded the contract shall be disqualified from further

consideration of award of this contract and shall be subject to any applicable penalties under the law.

2. Bribery: Any firm that attempts to influence a City official to award this contract to such proposer's firm by promising to provide or by providing to such City official any gratuity, entertainment, commission or any other gift, in exchange for a promise to award the contract to such firm shall be disqualified from further consideration of award of this contract and shall be subject to any applicable penalties under the law.
3. Conflict of Interest: Any firm that knows of any City official having a material direct or indirect financial interest in such proposer's firm shall be required to submit a written statement, along with the Form of Proposal, detailing such interest. Failure to disclose a known such financial interest shall result in the firm's disqualification from further consideration of award of this contract.