



City of Chester
1 Fourth Street
CHESTER, PA 19013
www.chestercity.com

Introduction

The City of Chester is seeking qualified individuals and/or consulting firms to submit statements of qualifications to perform a substantial update of the City's Vision 2020 Comprehensive Plan. Proposals will be accepted from individuals, firms, or groups of firms able to demonstrate having the experience and qualifications to provide the range of professional community planning services required of such work.

The City of Chester, located south of Philadelphia and north of Wilmington, Delaware is the only city in Delaware County. Chester is located along the banks of the Delaware River with direct access to New Jersey via the Commodore Barry Bridge. It also offers quick and convenient access to Philadelphia International Airport and the area's numerous ports, making it a prime location for businesses and residents alike. Business logistics make the city an ideal location for business development and investment. Major highways including I-95, I-476, US 322, US 13, State Routes, 291, 320, and 352 complement transportation needs of traditional and emerging industries. SEPTA commuter rail service is also accessible through the Chester Transportation Center, a regional transportation hub, and the Highland Avenue Train station on the city west end.

Chester's history is rich. The area was settled in 1644 by the Swedish and originally called Upland. William Penn – who allegedly first stepped ashore here, not at Penn's Landing in Philadelphia – changed the name to Chester in 1682, when he acquired the settlement as a safe haven for Quakers. Chester is the oldest city in Pennsylvania, incorporated as a borough in 1701 and then as a city in 1866.

From the mid 1600's and through the next 300 years, Chester was established as a prosperous manufacturing hub focused primarily on metal, machinery, textiles, and ship building. The city saw massive growth and economic growth during World War I and then a second period of economic prosperity during World War II fueled by industrial and business growth.

Today, Chester is in a period of tremendous revitalization. The expansion of State Route 291 along the city's river front boundary has spurred new development and investment in the future of the city's waterfront, which was once home to the booming industrial sector. The Philadelphia Union, the region's major league soccer team, calls the Chester waterfront home, as does Harrah's Casino and Racetrack, Kimberly-Clark, and several manufacturing companies. Additionally, the Central Business District is transforming into an investment choice for a host of Arts and Cultural venues with a focus on transit-oriented development.

The city provides a full range of municipal services including a full-time Police Department, full time Fire Department, Public Works Department, Licenses and Inspection Department, Health Department, and Parks and Recreation Department.

Chester's current Comprehensive Plan [Vision-2020-A-City-Beautiful-Movement](#) was adopted in 2012.

Local planning studies include:

[Downtown Chester Planning Overview 2017](#)

[Truck Wayfinding in the City of Chester](#)

[Resilience Through Recreation](#)

[The Chester Transportation Center and Economic Development- Action Plan](#)

[Chester City Ramp Access Study](#)

[Chester Riverfront and Community Rail Access Study](#)

[Route 291 Area Study](#)

[Chester Water Front Redefined](#)

Planning Approach

A response to this RFP shall include the respondent's proposed methodology and approach, including a general timeline for performing a review and substantial update of the Comprehensive Plan. Respondents should detail how their process will support the development of an implementable comprehensive plan.

The City is looking forward to a planning approach that:

- Is forward thinking, innovative, and unique to the City of Chester;
- Balances the interests of all those with a stake in the future of the City;
- Educates on best practices, proposes innovative alternatives, and incorporates examples from comparable communities;
- Creates a guide for setting preservation and land use policy and implementation strategies consistent with best practices for similarly situated and/or developed communities;
- Reviews, critiques, and incorporates recently published plans;
- Provides an awareness and sensitivity of emerging economic, social, technological, and environmental patterns and challenges; and
- Provides for diversified and thorough public involvement in the drafting and adoption process.
- Respondents should detail how they have worked with communities who are skeptical of planning and want to see - action.
- Provides an actionable set of strategies that are championed by leaders/ organizations in the community.
- Clearly defines the human and financial capital required for implementation of the actions.
- Is flexible to the changing conditions spurred by the pandemic and economic issues.
- Engages leaders and organizations that can support implementation of the recommendations.

Scope of Services

The City is expecting the development of an Implementable Comprehensive Plan. The respondent shall propose a general process for the project using past experience and best practices in similar communities. The comprehensive plan should address in detail an implementation directive for 2022– 2026 and provide guidance for a planning horizon of 2022 – 2035. Interagency coordination will be required including but not limited to the CUSD, SEPTA, PENNDOT, Delaware County OHCD, and DVRPC. Coordination with these entities will be the responsibility of the selected consultant.

The plan should be guided by the five keys for a successful implementable plan:

- Focus the plan on real, relevant community issues;
- Organize the plan the way local officials and citizens think;
- Devise practical and workable recommendations;
- Recruit partners and create capacity to implement the plan; and
- Get local ownership of the plan and commitment to implement

Once a contract has been approved by the Chester City Council, key city personnel will be available for input, consultation, inquiry, and review of all aspects of the planning effort; but it is not envisioned that city staff will be directly responsible for any work elements other than those specifically described herein.

Project Tasks

The respondent's proposal should address each of the following Project Tasks:

1. Overview and Existing Information Review

The respondent shall provide a summary overview to capture the scope of analysis and critique for: existing plans, projects, studies, and agreements, as well as any additional information that may influence or impact the planning process.

2. Data Collection and Analysis

The respondent shall analyze historic, current, and projected data pertaining (but not limited) to: housing/land use, population/demographic, employment/economic, transportation, technology, and education. Data should be organized by five-year increments (or as otherwise available and/or appropriate) and be used by the respondent to identify major characteristics, patterns /trends past and future that are meaningful and/or will affect the city during the planning horizon.

3. Impacts of Regional Trends

The respondent shall review regional migration patterns/trends, residential real estate markets, economic trends and other information affecting demand for Chester City.

4. Goals and Objectives

The respondent shall develop a comprehensive and concise set of goals and objectives to guide decisions during the planning period.

5. Citizen Participation

The respondent shall propose a detailed citizen participation process patterned after successful experiences the respondent had in prior plans prepared. The proposed approach should incorporate innovative approaches to drawing diverse groups and ideas into the

planning process. The respondent will be an integral part of the citizen participation process and will be expected to attend and participate in all meetings.

The citizen participation process may involve multiple approaches including (but not limited to): leadership interviews, community meetings, use of print and electronic media, surveys, and internet-based communication.

The goals of the citizen participation process are to:

- Educate involved parties about the comprehensive plan's role and importance to the community;
- Disseminate information to interested and involved parties;
- Provide effective and efficient mechanisms for gathering public input on various issues; and
- Engage the community and build consensus throughout all phases of the planning process.

6. Methodology

Evaluate, expand, and refine the planning elements of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan. This work will include a set of Plan Recommendations, an overarching Implementation Agenda, and Capital Resources Plan (as may be necessary) for each of the following nine (9) planning elements:

1. Community Profile
2. Community Facilities and Services
3. Historic Preservation
4. Environment and Natural Resources
5. Cultural Resources
6. Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
7. Housing
8. Transportation / Circulation
9. Public Safety
10. Land use

An economic development strategy planning process is currently underway and will serve as an additional element that should be incorporated through the other elements.

Specific Response Requirements

All proposals should be submitted in accordance with the instructions detailed below. Responses should address the following requests for information or questions.

1. Letter of Transmittal

Each proposal should be accompanied by a letter of transmittal which summarizes the key points of the proposal and which is signed by an authorized officer.

2. Firm Experience and Qualifications

- A. Provide an overview of the firm and its qualifications. Include the location of your firm's primary office, as well as any other offices in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or other states.
- B. Provide summaries of experience for individuals to be assigned to represent the City and describe the specific roles each would be expected to play and identify a project leader.
- C. Provide detailed resumes for each planner listed.
- D. Describe the firm's relevant municipal experience for the past five (5) years.
- E. Describe the firm's equal employment opportunity policies and programs.
- F. Submit evidence of errors and omissions insurance coverage.
- G. Submit three (3) municipal references from towns of like size; include names and direct telephone numbers.

3. Conflicts of Interest

- A. Describe any material financial relationships the firm or any employee has with any individual or organization that may create a conflict of interest in representing the City.
- B. Describe any family relationship that any firm employee has with any public servant that may create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest in representing the City.
- C. Describe any other matter your firm believes may create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest in representing the City and the how such conflicts described will be resolved.

4. Fee Proposals

The City of Chester will enter into a contract for professional consulting services based on a fixed-price (or lump sum) to the contractor for the specified scope of services. Incremental payments to the consultant will be made at the completion of major tasks up to a "not to

exceed” contract amount. Ten (10) percent of the contract price will be held as final payment upon delivery of the final products. The exact payment schedule will be negotiated and determined as part of a final agreement and shall be based on the budget provided with the proposal.

5. Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

The City Council reserves the right to:

- A. Select a proposal in its entirety or some portion(s) thereof;
- B. Reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part;
- C. Waive irregularities;
- D. Request presentations and/or interviews from individuals or firms determined to be in a competitive range;
- E. Make a final selection using criteria considered to be of maximum benefit to the City as a whole.

6. Selection Criteria

The City will establish an order of ranking of a minimum of two (2) firms based on the City’s evaluation of Proposals received. A ranking will be established directly from the Proposals. The following factors, listed in order of importance will be considered during the evaluation of Proposals received:

- A. The firm’s ability to provide expertise in the development of an implementable municipal Comprehensive Plan.

Weight: (25 points)
- B. The relevant municipal experience of the firm and the extent to which the firm is qualified to successfully complete identified Project Tasks.

Weight: (25 points)
- C. The utilization of locally based and regional diverse businesses as subconsultants, and the extent to which the firm is qualified to successfully complete identified Project Tasks.

Weight: (20 points)

- D. The firm's understanding of how the dynamics of socioeconomics, technological change, the *future of work*, regional infrastructure investment, climate change and their correlations affect the future of Chester and how a Comprehensive Plan should approach these forces.

Weight: (15 points)

- D. The firm's understanding of the City's history, position, challenges, and its potential for revitalization and (re)development.

Weight: (10 points)

- E. The firm's understanding of various grant programs and ability to assist the City in applying for such programs.

Weight: (5 points)

7. Proposal Submission

- A. Proposals, including any/all attachments, cover letter and tabs should not exceed fifteen (15) pages in length on 8 ½" x 11" paper, single spaced using a minimum font size of 11 pt. **Please do not provide marketing materials.**
- B. Proposals shall be formatted as a PDF file and may be submitted in electronic format via email or mailed to City of Chester, Planning Department, 1 Fourth St. Chester, PA 19013. Faxed proposals will **not** be accepted.
- C. **Proposal must be received by 4:00 pm EST on Monday, January 31, 2022.**
- F. PDF Proposal to: comprehensiveplan@chestercity
Subject line shall be: Comprehensive Plan Update RFP
- G. Any questions regarding the RFP should be addressed to: comprehensiveplan@chestercity Last day for questions will be COB, Wednesday, January 26, 2022
- H. The entire RFP and any Addendum will be included on the website at <https://www.chestercity.com/departments/department-of-public-affairs/planning-department/>

Insurance.

The Successful Bidder shall maintain general public liability insurance, which shall include coverage for acts of independent contractors or subcontractors, in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 for each occurrence and \$2,000,000 in the aggregate. The successful bidder shall also maintain property damage insurance in an amount not less than \$500,000 for each occurrence and \$1,000,000 in the aggregate. With submission of the signed Agreement, the successful bidder shall submit evidence of the required insurance coverage naming the Borough as additional insured or (co-insured as appropriate) and agrees to provide copies of the policies of insurance upon request by City. Such insurance shall be carried with financially responsible insurance companies, licensed in Pennsylvania and approved by the City and shall be kept in force during the entire term of the Agreement.

Selection Timetable

Selection will be based on proposals submitted, Staff's recommendation, and final determination by City Council as is expected to be finalized on or about February 23, 2022.