

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS



MUNICIPAL CONSULTATION SERVICES

Recreation & Parks Master Plan Update

**BOROUGH OF WEST CHESTER
401 EAST GAY STREET
WEST CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA 19380**

March 17 , 2023

Introduction

West Chester Borough, Chester County, Pennsylvania, is located approximately 25 miles west of Philadelphia. The Borough of West Chester (Borough) occupies about 1.8 sq. mi. and its current population is approximately 20,000. The Borough is governed by a seven- member Council elected by wards, in addition to an at-large elected Mayor. West Chester is a home rule municipality.

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to obtain proposals from qualified consulting firms or individuals licensed to practice in the Commonwealth. The respondent should have substantial experience in the areas of practice specified in the scope of work. Respondents may reply to one, several, or all of the requested services.

Attendance at meetings of Borough Council may be required. The Borough Council voting session takes place the third Wednesday of each month.

Borough of West Chester Recreation and Master Parks Plan

The Borough of West Chester is blessed with an exceptional [park system](#). Most, if not all, residents can walk to a park within five minutes from their home. This is an exceptional value to our residents.

The Recreation and Parks Master Plan (the Plan) will become the blueprint for park improvements and recreation endeavors in the future. One of the most important elements of the plan will be to prioritize proposed improvements. The prioritized list will be used to support grant applications for necessary park improvements.

Scope of Work

1. *Kick-off Meeting and Project Orientation:*

DATE TBD Council Work Session or Other Meeting

There will be an initial kick-off meeting with representatives from the Borough to confirm project expectations and discuss key issues and expected outcomes. It is anticipated that the ongoing planning efforts and coordination between the Borough and its residents will yield important information related to specific potential constraints and opportunities. Specific goals for the meeting will include:

- confirm the project objectives;
- identify key project stakeholders;
- identify other relevant prior plans and studies;
 - Ex: [TCA Recreation Fee in Lieu of Study](#)
 - Ex: [Chapter 97-38,1](#) Recreational land and facilities or payment fees in lieu thereof.
- identify communications channels and project personnel;
- outline a community outreach process;
- outline anticipated agency and regulatory coordination and approvals;
 - Ex: [Chester County's Landscapes 3](#)
- identify targeted project budget and schedules.

2. *Define Goals and Objectives:* The consultant team will work with Borough officials, staff, and project stakeholders to define the Borough’s specific goals and objectives for the Plan as specified in sections 3 – 9 of the RFP. This will include a detailed description of the intended purpose of the Plan, and identification of specific outcomes.

3. **Project Background:** To make sure that the recommendations are consistent with established municipal goals, the consultant team will review and become familiar with previous relevant plans, studies, and information, including the most current [Borough's Comprehensive Plan](#), and any prior open space and recreation plans and studies.

General community information (population, demographics, etc.), to confirm current and projected future needs of the Borough will also be reviewed.

4. **Parks and Open Space Inventory:** A thorough field inventory of existing parks, playgrounds, and public open space within the Borough to gain a full understanding of the opportunities, constraints, and physical context will be conducted. Photographs or otherwise record conditions observed in the field will be made. The inventory will include an assessment of existing conditions, such as:

- Size, type, and ownership for each property;
- ADA compliance, including entrances and slopes;
- Site access, circulation, and connectivity to other parks and open spaces;
- Safety concerns;
- General age and condition of equipment and facilities;
- Grading (slopes) and drainage issues;
- Stormwater management/mitigation;

5. **Base Map Preparation:** Working from existing Borough base information, supplemented by aerial photography and field verification, a plan of existing parks, playground, and open space resources will be created, to serve as the working base for planning drawings and diagrams.

6. **Community Needs Assessment:** The current and projected needs of the community for open space and recreation facilities will be evaluated. The degree to which existing facilities meet or fall short of that target will be assessed. This analysis will encompass several factors, including:

- a. National Standards: Compare existing community resources with accepted national standards. Using established guidelines, a summary of the various types of parks and the recommended minimum/maximum standard sizes and quantities of each type of park; and compare them against the existing acreage and facilities will be performed.
- b. Recreation Programming: Through discussion with Borough officials, stakeholders, and non-profit recreation and athletic associations, a list of existing recreation programs available in the community. These programs will be compared with the resources offered by existing facilities, as well as projected future needs and desires for program expansion.
- c. Americans with Disabilities Act: Existing parks and recreation facilities will be reviewed for accessibility and determine whether reasonable opportunities exist to allow people with disabilities to participate in and benefit from programs. Recommendations for compliance and improvements will be made.

7. **Opportunities:** Identify and evaluate options for expanding the Borough's existing parks and open space system to better meet the needs of the community. Options to be explored may include:

- a. Vacant/undeveloped land – potential benefits and approximate costs of acquisition
- b. Potential to expand/renovate existing facilities – opportunities to upgrade or reprogram existing parks and properties with new uses that may be more relevant to current and future needs.
- c. Utility Corridors – Opportunities to utilize existing rail and/or utility corridors for development as trails and greenways, for recreation benefit and as connections between other parks and open space resources.
- d. Natural feature corridors such as stream, floodplains, and habitat corridors.

8. **Recommendations:** Based on an assessment of community needs and available opportunities, a coherent set of recommendations for expansion and upgrade of the Borough's Parks and Open Space system will be developed. This Plan will be intended to serve as the documentation of goals and strategies, as well as recommendations for specific improvements. The Plan will include:

- a. Description of proposed improvements for each existing park facility
- b. Suggested properties for acquisition, and proposed use for each
- c. Conceptual sketch plans for each property
- d. Overall Borough-wide plan diagram
- e. Overview of current and projected future recreation programming

9. **Public Outreach:** To assure that ample opportunity is provided for input by the community and project stakeholders, a public process that solicits input from Borough residents and constituent groups will be conducted.

- a. Steering Committee Meetings: The Borough's Recreation Commission will act as the Steering Committee to provide input to the process and serve as a sounding board for our recommendations. During these meetings the committee will identify key issues, review proposed findings, discuss alternative solutions, and refine the recommendations. Steering Committee meetings will occur at the following stages in the design process:
 - o **Meeting 1:** Introduce project, clarify objectives, gather input as to priorities for evaluating alternatives, and identify resources and challenges.
 - o **Meeting 2:** Present initial findings and preliminary recommendations and solicit feedback.
 - o **Meeting 3:** Present draft Recreation Plan and solicit feedback on concepts and implementation strategy.

- b. Stakeholder Meetings: In addition to the input provided by the Steering Committee, one-on-one meetings with stakeholders will be necessary to review specific aspects of the project in detail as the Plan is being developed and refined.
- c. Public Meetings: Two (2) public meetings will be held during the course of the project to present findings and gather community input. One meeting will occur near the beginning of the process to solicit input and the other will take place near the end of the process as final recommendations are being formulated.
- d. Website Support: To encourage public input and discussion, graphic materials and written project summaries will be provided for the Borough to post on its website and social media outlets.
- e. Public Opinion Survey: Public opinion surveys are an effective way to reach residents of the Borough who cannot attend the public meetings. Manage an online survey will be created to gather public input on planning and revitalization efforts from large audiences.

10. **Implementation Plan**: An overall strategy for implementation of the proposed improvements will be developed. This will include:

- *Action Plan*: Identifying responsible parties and roles, outlining discreet action items and timelines for each leading to project implementation.
- *Phasing Plan*: Prioritized list of projects and actions, broken into short-term, medium-term, and long-term phases, depending on cost, complexity, readiness for implementation, and other relevant factors.
- *Opinion of Costs*: For recommended improvements regarding construction.
- *Funding Sources*: Identify specific potential sources for capital funding to make improvements, including eligible grant programs, and other strategies.
- *Recreation Programming*: Summary of recommended programs, as identified during the outreach process.
- *Opinion of Costs*: Identifying required maintenance tasks, associated costs, and responsible parties.

11. **Final Report Document:** All the work products described above will be assembled into a formal bound final report and furnished as DRAFT for review by the Borough and Steering Committee. After this review, any necessary revisions will be incorporated into the DRAFT and a final report will be issued. Final documents will be furnished in both hardcopy and electronic formats, in quantities and specific electronic formats as desired. Final deliverables comprising the Plan will include:

- *Narrative Report:* A final narrative report that describes the project goals, methodology, and results. The final report will be submitted to the Borough for adoption/acceptance. The report will include a stand-alone Executive Summary containing the main points of the full document.
- *Maps and Plans:* Key analytical maps and drawings will be provided as presentation-size hard copy originals, as well as in electronic format.
- *Digital CD/E-files:* Containing the Study Report and Maps and Plans in a digital, reproducible format.
- *Meeting Minutes* and other records of project correspondence.
- Formal Borough Resolution accepting the Report.

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

- a) Each proposal should be accompanied by a letter of transmittal which summarizes the proposal and is signed by an authorized person.

2) Firm Experience and Qualifications

- a) Provide an overview of the firm and its qualifications and indicate which services in the scope are included in the proposal. Include the location of your firm's primary office, as well as any other offices in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or other states.
- b) Describe your firm's relevant municipal practice responsive to the scope of service.
- c) Describe your firm's recruitment and retention policies and describe how you are compliant with Equal Opportunity Employer standards.
- d) Submit evidence of relevant insurance coverage.
- e) Submit three (3) references from different municipalities of similar size.

3) Consultation Services Team

- a) Provide summaries or resumes of experience for each individual who would be assigned to represent the Borough. Describe the specific roles that each person would be expected to play and identify the lead or senior engineer. Indicate licensure status of each individual.

4) **Conflicts of Interest**

- a) Describe any material financial relationships that you or your firm or any employee has with any individual or organization that may create a conflict of interest in representing the Borough.
- b) Second, describe any family relationship that any employee of your firm has with any public servant that may create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest in representing the Borough.
- c) Third, describe any other matter that your firm believes may create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest in representing the Borough and the manner in which such conflicts described in this paragraph will be resolved.

5) **Fee Proposals**

- a) Provide a lump sum payment to be distributed in monthly installments. and specify the minimum billable time increment. The fee proposal should include any reimbursable expenses or overhead charges. Please include the amount of time the proposed fees will remain unchanged.
- b) Opinion of Costs: Hourly rate for grant writing and implementation services for the grant the will in part, or whole, pay for the services of the awarded consultation company for the Plan.

6) Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

- a) Borough Council reserves the right to:
 - i) Select a proposal in its entirety or some portion(s) thereof
 - ii) Reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part
 - iii) Waive irregularities
 - iv) Request oral presentations and/or interviews
 - v) Make the final selection using criteria wholly at the discretion of the Borough

7) Proposal Submission

- a) Proposals shall be submitted as a single PDF file via email to the address below.
- b) Proposals must be received by 11:00 am prevailing time on April 24, 2023.
- c) Proposals are to be submitted to:

kkurowski@west-chester.com

Subject line = Municipal Consultation
Recreation and Master Parks Plan RFP

Questions regarding the RFP should be addressed to Keith A. Kurowski,
Director of Parks and Recreation. kkurowski@west-chester.com

Selection Timetable

The selection of the successful candidate will be based on proposals submitted determined by the Borough Council.

- a) Anticipated bid award date of Wednesday May 17th, 2023.
- b) Start of work to begin no less 21 days after bid is awarded.

##End of Request for Proposal##