



Upper Gwynedd Township

1 Parkside Place
North Wales, PA 19454

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ACTION ITEM REQUEST

Date: November 9, 2020

To: Sandra Brookley Zadell, Township Manager

From: Sarah A Prebis, Park and Recreation Director

Re: DVPRC Contract for the Liberty Bell Trail

Meeting Date: November 23, 2020

Background:

The Liberty Bell Trail is a proposed trail that will continue for 25 miles, potentially connect Quakertown to East Norriton in Montgomery County. As passed in the 2020 budget on December 16, 2019, the board agreed to budget to partially fund a survey for the Liberty Bell Trail. We have received a contract from DVRPC (Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission) who has given us a grant and we will need signatures to move on through this process. The RFP (request for proposal) has been created and we are ready to start advertising after we get this contract signed. The municipalities included in this study are Franconia Township, Hatfield Borough, Hatfield Township, Lansdale Borough, Souderton Borough, Telford Borough and Upper Gwynedd Township. Upper Gwynedd Township is the lead on this project. Also attached to this is the RFP that Upper Gwynedd has created for this trail.

Budget Impact:

The Liberty Bell Project will be receiving \$113,000 from DVRPC. The match for this is \$28,250. Since Upper Gwynedd Township has not completed any of this trail, our portion for the match is \$12,000.

Interdepartmental Action:

Upper Gwynedd would get these signatures and return this contract to DVPRC. PA Environmental Council and all 7 municipalities would then start advertising this RFP to get engineers in to bid on the project. After we receive the bids, Upper Gwynedd and Hatfield



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Township would search through the bids and start interviewing potential candidates (virtually at this time.)

Recommended Motion/Resolution/Ordinance:

Motion to approve this contract and get the specified signatures. Also a motion to approve the RFP, so we can start advertising for a firm to complete this study.

Request for Proposal for the Liberty Bell Trail

Franconia Township

Hatfield Borough

Hatfield Township

Lansdale Borough

Souderton Borough

Telford Borough

Upper Gwynedd Township

Franconia Township, Hatfield Borough, Hatfield Township, Lansdale Borough, North Wales Borough, Souderton Borough, Telford Borough and Upper Gwynedd Township are seeking to engage a professional consultant to conduct a planning and feasibility study for a proposed Liberty Bell Trail that will, when completed, cover over 25 miles, travelling from East Norriton in Montgomery County to Quakertown Borough in Bucks County. This 25-mile trail will connect the Schuylkill River Trail with the Upper Bucks Rail Trail.

The portion of the trail that will be involved in this study will travel 11 miles starting in Telford Borough and ending in Upper Gwynedd Township and travel through all the municipalities listed above.

Sealed proposals must be received by:

Zhenya J. Nalywayko

Trails & Recreation Program Coordinator

Pennsylvania Environmental Council

znalywayko@pecpa.org

1315 Walnut Street, Suite 532

Philadelphia, PA 19107

Phone: 215-545-4570

Deadline: Proposals are due to the PEC office no later than 3:00pm on Friday, December 11, 2020.

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RFP for Liberty Bell Trail Feasibility Study

**Franconia Township, Hatfield Borough, Hatfield Township, Lansdale Borough, Souderton Borough,
Telford Borough and Upper Gwynedd Township.**

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I. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Franconia Township, Hatfield Borough, Hatfield Township, Lansdale Borough, Souderton Borough, Telford Borough and Upper Gwynedd Township are seeking the services of a qualified consultant to provide a feasibility study for a proposed Liberty Bell Trail. This study area is 11 miles long and runs from Telford Borough through the aforementioned municipalities and ending in Upper Gwynedd Township. The municipalities are proposing a multi-use asphalt trail. A map is included with this RFP. The chosen consultant will be responsible for all work, to include but not to be limited to the layout of the trail, trail alignment, identification of special provisions, and estimated design and construction cost.

The project is partially funded by a grant from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) under its Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI). DVRPC has certain requirements and standards that must be met by the municipalities and the contracted consultant. This Request for Proposal (RFP) has been prepared to meet these requirements and standards. TCDI will monitor the project and certain documents will be subject to review and approval.

II. EFFORTS TO DATE

In recent years, one of the municipalities have completed some, or all their portions of the proposed Liberty Bell Trail. These include:

Lansdale Borough – The borough of Lansdale has completed or is in the process of completing most of their portion of the Liberty Bell Trail. They have 1.1 miles of an asphalt, multi-use trail running from the Andale Section to W 3rd street in Lansdale Borough. They are in the process of completing .37 miles from Stony Creek Park to the Andale Section.

Hatfield Borough - Hatfield Borough has completed roughly half a mile of the Liberty Bell Trail, running along railroad tracks from Vine Street to Towamencin Avenue near Main Street.

III. GENERAL TERMS

- The **Municipalities** reserve the right to reject any or all proposals and to select the proposal that it determines to be in the best interest of **Franconia, Hatfield Borough, Hatfield Township, Lansdale, Souderton, Telford and Upper Gwynedd municipalities**.
- Proposers are bound by the deadlines and location requirements for submittals in response to this RFP as stated below.
- Proposals will remain effective for **the municipalities** review and approval for 60 days from the deadline for submitting proposals.

- If only one proposal is received by **all the municipalities**, they may negotiate with the proposer or seek additional proposals on a formal or informal basis during the 60-day period that proposals are effective.
- The proposer is encouraged to clarify, modify, or add to any scope of work item that it deems appropriate to develop a high-quality plan. All changes should be clearly identified and explained. The proposed scope of work must accomplish the goals and work as stated below.

IV SCOPE OF WORK

To advance this portion of the Liberty Bell Trail corridor, Upper Gwynedd Township, in active collaboration with seven nearby municipalities and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, will jointly hire a consultant to complete a feasibility study update, aimed at building upon the 2005 feasibility study prepared by the Waetzman Planning Group and revise it to reflect current physical and environmental conditions to achieve Circuit Trails standards. The feasibility study update will identify potential alignment options and determine a preferred alignment as well. Upper Gwynedd Township and its partners anticipate hiring a consultant by January 31, 2021, and having the consultant complete the feasibility study update by July 31, 2022. The feasibility study update is the project's deliverable.

The feasibility study will analyze bridges and intersections along the corridor, links to other existing and planned Circuit Trails, as well as connections to smaller neighborhood-level trails, schools, workplaces, and town center business districts. Upper Gwynedd Township and municipal partners will also ensure that the feasibility study update addresses how the Liberty Bell Trail corridor and regional PennDOT projects could potentially impact one another. Additionally, the feasibility study will identify and analyze connections along the trail corridor to public transportation, as well as the trail's environmental impacts on nearby tributaries, flood plains and wetlands. As part of the feasibility study update, property owners will be identified, and initial informal conversations will be held with property owners to assess their comfort with the trail alternatives being considered. The historical context of the trail corridor and its surrounding region will also be considered.

Another objective of this project is to raise public awareness and support, while also cultivating political momentum, to move this 11-mile portion of the Liberty Bell Trail into design and eventually into construction. The municipalities will collaborate with the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, a nonprofit with extensive experience in advancing trail development, to supplement work performed by the hired consultant. PEC will develop a community survey, organize public meetings, and conduct key person interviews. Together, the survey, public meetings and key person interviews will provide insight into which amenities the Liberty Bell Trail should have, and which factors the feasibility study should take into consideration. Additionally, a local community-level stakeholder advisory committee will be established to help guide the feasibility study forward and ensure that the study reflects the concerns of neighborhood residents, local businesses, and community groups.

A key focus of the feasibility study update will be to provide a clear understanding of how the Liberty Bell Trail can effectively integrate existing modes of transportation, such as personal vehicles and SEPTA regional rail trains and buses, with new active modes of transportation, such as biking and walking. Creating an integrated, multimodal transportation network is one of the five key principles in DVRPC's *Connections 2045—Plan for Greater Philadelphia*. Through this enhanced multimodal network of transportation options, the North Penn region's municipalities, and Montgomery County as a whole, can continue, and even improve upon, their successful efforts to promote sustainability. Likewise, by analyzing how the trail and nearby town centers can most effectively be linked together, the feasibility study update will help the North Penn region develop livable communities.

The proposed scope of work for this project includes an initial round of planning activities aimed at developing a feasibility study for bicycle and pedestrian traffic for this corridor. The corridor starts in Telford and runs through six municipalities ending in Upper Gwynedd Township.

A. Study Components

- A trail layout map using PASDA aerial topographic maps with a contour interval of 2 ft and a scale of 1": 100'. This map should indicate the location of the trail, property boundaries based on tax mapping, natural resource areas including wooded areas, wetlands (based upon available mapping,) streams, roads, conceptual grading, proposed storm water management facilities, proposed retaining walls and all other proposed features for the purpose of establishing design and construction cost.
- Necessary maps, in PDF form, including, but not limited to, boundary and location maps.
- Review of ROW, utility covenants and/or other easements to identify and discuss possible issues during development of construction drawings.
- Implementation strategy with approximate costs. The strategy should include discussions of phasing, maintenance, sustainability of the proposed trail and development schedule.
- Draft and Final Feasibility Study.
- Meeting with residents and/or Public Input Sessions to educate the public. A total of 1 public meeting per municipality meetings will suffice (staff, public and commissioners.) This equates to 7 total public meetings.
- Monthly meetings with the Feasibility Study Management group which consists of the Managers from each municipality.
- 2 public outreach meetings as needed for a total of 10-14 meetings (may be small group, focus groups, small neighborhood meetings, etc.)
- Throughout the public outreach process, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council will assist the project team (including the chosen consultant) through:

- Project coordination to convene the project team and organize and set agendas for meetings.
- Engaging citizens in all municipalities along the Liberty Bell Trail corridor, including coordinating the public participation process with team members, stakeholders, and the public.
- Forming and facilitating a stakeholder group, including agencies and institutions from all involved municipalities that have a stake in trail development.
- Performing and compiling stakeholder interviews to deepen the understanding of aspirations, concerns, and opportunities related to trail development.
- Coordinating public meetings in support of the consultant team feasibility update and conduct public education regarding the value of the Liberty Bell Trail and the benefits of trails in general.
- Assisting in other aspects of project coordination and management, such as consultant management and grant reporting, when appropriate.

B. Items to be included in the analysis and design are:

- Identify and discuss requirements to obtain permits and approvals including, but not limited to: county, state, and federal agencies and those required for any at-grade railroad crossings (Montgomery County Conservation District, PennDOT and SEPTA).
- Connection proposals will be shown on large format maps prepared from a common base map. Maps will show area beyond study boundary (within one quarter of a mile).
- Identify and estimate the potential impact of the adjacent land uses (public, agricultural, industrial, business, residential, etc.).
- Funding sources such as state and federal funds, non-profit organizations, and volunteer groups should be identified.
- Show and discuss possible phasing scenarios.
- Any areas needing buffers.
- Facilities necessary to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Conceptual design of all roadway/ railroad crossings by the trail.

C. Products and Deliverables

- Seven (7) color copies of draft plan for comments.

- Seven (7) unbound color copies of draft plan.
- One (1) digital copy of draft plan (format to be determined, print ready, graphics included).
- Final plan copies to include five (5) bound color copies.
- Seven (7) unbound color copies of final plan.
- One (1) digital copy of final plan (format to be determined, print ready, graphics included).
- Maps (all GIS and other digital maps).
- Maps (all presentation maps as Adobe Acrobat (PDF) or JPEG format).

V. CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

The consultant selected must meet these general qualifications:

- Have documented experience developing and implementing public participation techniques, such as holding public and study committee meetings, conducting key person interviews, developing citizen surveys, etc.
- At least one member of the consulting team must have documented, prior experience conducting studies of the project type being undertaken. This person should be the project leader and assume overall project coordination responsibilities between the grantee and the consulting team.
- Have documented experience with the planning, design, general operation and maintenance of recreation and park areas and facilities.
- Have documented experience in developing and recommending to local government officials and non-profit organizations the policies and procedures related to providing public recreation and park services and/or facilities, as well as the management and operation of these facilities and amenities.
- Have documented experience in setting goals, analyzing problems, generating alternative solutions, and providing recommendations and implementation strategies.
- Have expertise in greenways and trails planning.

VI. REQUIRED SUBMITTALS

A. Letter of Transmittal

This letter must include the following:

- A statement demonstrating your understanding of the work to be performed.
- A statement confirming that the firm meets the Bureau's Consultant Qualifications (Section 4).

- The firm's contact person and telephone number.

B. Profile of Firm

This consists of the following:

- A statement of the firm's experience in conducting work of the nature sought by this RFP; advertising brochures may be included in support of this statement.
- The location of the firm's office that will perform the work.
- Resumes of individuals (consultants, employees, etc.) proposed to conduct the work and the specific duties of each in relation to the work. The project consulting team must meet the Bureau's Consultant Qualifications (Section 4) and this should be included with proposal.
- A reference list of other municipal clients of the firm with contact information.
- Any other information relating to the capabilities and expertise of the firm in doing comparable work.

C. Methods and Procedures

The proposal must include a detailed description of the methods and procedures the firm will use to perform the work. Inclusion of examples of similar work is encouraged.

D. Work Schedule

The schedule must include time frames for each major work element, target dates for public meetings, and dates for completion of draft and final documents.

E. Cost

For each major work element, the costs must be itemized and indicate:

- For each person assigned to the work, the title/rank (organizational level) of the person in the organization, the hourly rate, and the number of hours to be worked.
- The reimbursable expenses to be claimed.

The itemized costs must be totaled to produce a contract price. If awarded a contract, a proposer is bound by this price in performing the work. The contract price may not be exceeded unless the contract is amended, in writing, to allow for additional costs.

Costs cannot be included in the RFP submission, they must be submitted under a separate, sealed package.

If awarded a contract, the proposer may not change the staffing assigned to the project without approval by **Franconia, Hatfield Borough, Hatfield Township, Lansdale, Souderton, Telford, and Upper Gwynedd municipalities.**

However, approval will not be denied if the staff replacement is determined by the municipalities listed above to be of equal ability or experience to the predecessor.

The method of billing must be stated. The preferred practice of **Franconia, Hatfield Borough, Hatfield Township, Lansdale, Souderton, Telford, and Upper Gwynedd municipalities** is to pay upon completion of the work and receipt of the required report. However, **the municipalities** will consider paying on a periodic basis as substantial portions of the work are completed.

VII. EVALUATION CRITERIA

A. Technical Expertise and Experience

The following factors will be considered:

- The firm's experience in performing similar work
- The level of expertise of the individuals assigned to conduct the work
- The clarity and completeness of the proposal and the firm's demonstrated understanding of the work to be performed

B. Procedures and Methods

The following factors will be considered:

- The techniques for collecting and analyzing data
- The sequence and relationships of major steps
- The methods for managing the work to ensure timely and orderly completion

C. Cost

The following factors will be considered:

- The number of hours of work to be performed
- The level of expertise of the individuals assigned to conduct the work

D. Oral Presentation

Any or all firms submitting proposals may be invited to give an oral presentation of their proposal.