

# East Whiteland Township letterhead

May 25, 2018

**Subject: Request for Proposals  
Open Space, Parks and Recreation Plan  
East Whiteland Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania**

East Whiteland Township seeks professional planning services to prepare a Open Space, Parks and Recreation Plan. The Plan is intended to create an overall strategy for identifying, operating and maintaining open space and active/passive recreational opportunities throughout the Township. The Plan will also serve to update existing parks, recreation and trail planning while integrating them with the open space plan into a comprehensive strategy. The Township's goal is to develop a plan that is publicly supported, specific, and implementable. East Whiteland seeks a consultant (or consultants) with experience in:

1. Open Space planning and preservation
2. Parks and Recreation planning and design
3. Greenway and Trail (pedestrian & bicycle) planning
4. Concept and Master planning
5. Natural Resource planning
6. Chester County Grant Administration (see paragraph below)
7. Public Engagement, Presentation and Consensus Building

The plan will be funded in part by a grant awarded in 2018 from the Vision Partnership Program (VPP) administered by the Chester County Planning Commission. Applicants should ensure that their proposals take into account the current VPP funding requirements which are fully available for review on the Chester County website at [www.chesco.org/planning/vpp](http://www.chesco.org/planning/vpp).

## **Background**

East Whiteland Township completed an official Comprehensive Plan that was adopted on July 13, 2016. One of the priority focus areas established in the Comprehensive Plan is Community Resource Preservation. The Plan states: *“Community resources, including natural features, historic sites and structures, scenic roadways, and open spaces are at risk in East Whiteland Township. According to the DVRPC, less than 5% of the Township’s 7,500 acres remains vacant. Between 1990 and 2010, the Township lost 1,000 acres each of vacant and wooded lands. In 2010, 20% of the Township was wooded, down from 28% in 1990. The contribution that these natural and historic features make to the health, character, and identity of a place are often underestimated until they are gone. After the Great Recession of the late 2000s, the rate of growth and development in the region has once again rapidly picked up. This has spurred a renewed sense of urgency to preserve dwindling resources and open spaces that help define the Township and contribute to its character, environmental health, and recreational opportunities.”*

The Comprehensive Plan goes on to make a number of recommendations to address Community Resource Preservation including:

1. Actively acquire open space through conservation easements, and where needed, fee simple acquisition.
2. Adopt a Township Official Map.
3. Consider a Municipal Open Space Fund.
4. Be active in regional initiatives and form partnerships with local land trusts and other organizations whose missions compliment the Townships efforts to conserve resources
5. Continue to improve and enforce regulatory standards that protect steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, riparian buffers, and woodlands, and historic resources.
6. Encourages private landowners to participate in resources protection and best management practices.
7. Consider a transfer of development rights (TDR) program whereas the development rights from an open space area could be bought and used within the growth areas of the Township
8. Continue existing policies that promote residential clustering.

Another priority focus area of the Comprehensive Plan is Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation and Connectivity. The Plan states: *“Since its first inclusion in the 2001 Comprehensive Plan update, the Township’s vision for a community-wide network of trails, sidewalks, crosswalks, and pathways has gained increasingly visible support. The popularity and success of the Chester Valley Trail has increased requests for connections to nearby neighborhoods and demonstrates the growing demand for bike and pedestrian options for recreation and transportation. Results of the online survey also illustrated strong support for expanding the bike/pedestrian network for all users. The Chester Valley Trail is the spine of the Township’s existing trail network. This Chester County owned and maintained trail will eventually connect with Montgomery County to the east and Downingtown to the west. Aside from the Chester Valley Trail, the pedestrian network in East Whiteland Township consists of some park trails, pathways within the corporate campuses, and a scattering of disconnected sidewalks.*

*There are several notable regional plans that can help to form the Township’s Bike/Pedestrian framework and developing network:*

- *Route 29/Great Valley Multimodal Study (2014)*
- *Patriots Path Plan (2014)*
- *Devault Rail-Trail Trail Feasibility Study (2014)”*

As with Community Resource Planning, the Comprehensive Plan makes several recommendations to address bicycle and pedestrian circulation and connectivity including:

1. Advance regional bike/pedestrian connections.
2. Enhance access and use of the Chester Valley Trail.
3. Plan for and implement trail connections between existing neighborhoods and key destinations.
4. Promote bike/pedestrian connections along the Township’s main corridors and provide a safe and comfortable environment for users.

5. Plan for on-road bicycle facilities.

A Township Trails Plan was also prepared as a part of the Comprehensive Plan being described in Figure 9 and Map 1 of the document.

### **Project Overview**

Proposal submittal, review, and selection will follow the schedule outlined below.

1. June 12, 2018 at 3 p.m. – Pre-submission briefing meeting. The Township will host a pre-submission meeting on June 12, 2018 at 3 p.m.. The briefing will be held at the East Whiteland Township Office located at 209 Conestoga Road, Frazer, PA 19355. The purpose of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for consultants to ask questions of the Township staff and representatives from the Chester County Planning Commission. **This briefing is mandatory. Any consultant/firm wishing to submit a proposal must send a representative to attend this session.**
2. June 25, 2018 at 12:00 noon – Submission deadline. Proposals may be submitted electronically via email addressed to Steven Brown at [sbrown@easthiteland.org](mailto:sbrown@easthiteland.org), noting in the subject line: “Open Space, Parks and Recreation Plan Proposal”, or can also be submitted in person or via U.S. postal delivery in a sealed envelope, marked with the project name, and delivered to the East Whiteland Township building located at 209 Conestoga Road, Frazer, PA 19355.
3. Date to be determined– Consultant interviews (optional). At the discretion of the Township, Township staff may elect to interview one or more candidates to learn about the lead planner and project team.
4. July 11, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. – Project award. The Board of Supervisors plans to award the project during their regular business meeting on July 11, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

### **Scope of Work**

The Township anticipates that the Plan will involve the following project tasks:

### **Summary**

The Open Space, Parks, and Recreation Plan will establish a comprehensive strategy for identifying, acquiring, operating, and maintaining open space and active / passive recreational opportunities throughout East Whiteland Township. The plan will address the following guiding principles identified in the township’s 2016 comprehensive plan.

East Whiteland Township is envisioned to be a community that:

- Conserves Open Space for enjoyment of future generations and enhancement of Community Character
- Values and protects Historic, Natural and Scenic Resources for their vital roles in Township identity, health and recreation, and green infrastructure

- Invests in a growing network of trails, bike paths, sidewalks, and pathways that facilitates safe and convenient walking and biking around the Township for work, school, and recreation

This project will include a comprehensive public outreach process to help shape the focus of the study scope; identify properties to protect for future use; and provide valuable feedback on recommended strategies. The plan will account for recommendations in past planning efforts, and provide guidance to East Whiteland Township in prioritizing projects. Additionally, this project will identify a clear course of action for key recommended projects and policies.

## **1.0 Project Tasks**

### **1.1 Project Management**

The consultant will prepare an initial project schedule with key milestones, including necessary meetings with the Plan Advisory Committee, public meetings, and a public hearing. The consultant will maintain and monitor the schedule and budget on a monthly basis. The consultant will submit monthly status reports and invoices to East Whiteland Township and the Chester County Planning Commission.

*Deliverables: initial project schedule; monthly status reports and invoices; meeting agendas; meeting sign-in sheets; meeting summaries*

### **1.2 Existing Conditions Inventory and Data Collection**

The consultant will review and analyze the following readily available data to identify opportunities and constraints for implementing the Open Space, Park, and Recreation Plan:

- **Relevant Plans and Studies:** The consultant will review previous and current plans related to parks, recreation, open space, and trails, including but limited to: *Comprehensive Plan (July 13, 2016)*, *Park and Recreation Plan (2003)*, *Addendum to Park and Recreation Plan (December 2015)*, *Devault Trail Feasibility Study (October 15, 2015)*, *Patriot's Path Plan (March 10, 2010)* and *Great Valley/Route 29 Multimodal Study (March 2014)*.
- **Base Map:** The consultant will develop a base map illustrating existing conditions using readily available data. The base map will incorporate available GIS data from the Chester County Planning Commission, such as parcels, contours, streams, parks, open space, roads, bus routes, sidewalks, existing and planned trails, and cultural features. Additionally, the base map will identify key destinations for walking and biking trips in East Whiteland Township and potential regional trail connections beyond the township.
- **Field Inventory:** The consultant will conduct a field visit to inventory existing key land uses, environmental features, cultural features, and other visible physical features. The field visit will focus on inventorying existing trails and pedestrian facilities, parks, and open spaces. Photographs will be taken to document existing features, opportunities, and constraints.
- **Existing Township Ordinances:** The consultant will review the existing township zoning ordinance, and subdivision and land development ordinance to identify how parks, recreation, open space, trails, sidewalks, and on-road biking facilities are currently addressed.

*Deliverables: summary of opportunities and constraints; base map depicting the existing conditions inventory; photographs from field visit; summary of current ordinance provisions*

### **1.3 Vision, Goals, and Objectives**

The consultant will lead the Plan Advisory Committee in establishing a vision and mission as well as goals and objectives to identify and improve the park, recreation and open space opportunities in East Whiteland Township. The consultant will lead the Plan Advisory Committee in developing goals for acres of protected open space, increased opportunities for recreational facilities and programming, and miles of trails, greenways, and on-road facilities in the township to be developed by a determined horizon year.

*Deliverables: Vision and mission statements; list of goals and objectives*

### **1.4 Plan for Open Space**

The consultant will evaluate opportunities for adding to the protected open space in East Whiteland Township. The consultant will identify the community need for and benefits of additional open space. The consultant will identify strategies for protecting existing parcels. The consultant will identify potential impacts on adjacent property owners / land uses. The consultant will assist the Plan Advisory Committee in prioritizing properties for the township to pursue for protection. The consultant will prepared a list of criteria by which to evaluate property for preservation (e.g. woodlands, stream corridors, parcel size, adjacent to other protected land, development pressure, etc.).

*Deliverables: prioritized list of potential parcels to protect; map of potential parcels; list of strategies and evaluation criteria*

### **1.5 Plan for Recreation Facilities and Programming**

The consultant will evaluate existing recreational facilities and programming in the township. The consultant will identify the community need and benefits for additional recreational facilities and programming. The consultant will identify potential impacts on adjacent property owners / land uses. The consultant will identify strategies to improve the delivery of services. The consultant will work with the Plan Advisory Committee to prioritize strategies. The consultant will coordinate with neighboring municipalities to identify opportunities for collaborating on recreational programming.

*Deliverables: list of community needs; prioritized strategies for improving delivery of services*

### **1.6 Plan for Multimodal and Greenway Connections**

The consultant will evaluate bicycle and pedestrian connections identified in the East Whiteland Township Comprehensive Plan. The consultant will analyze potential demand for and use of additional greenway and multimodal corridors in the township. The consultant will

identify potential linkages to connect greenways, trails, open space, and parks. The consultant will identify the type of facility and alignment of potential connections. The consultant will identify and address potential impacts on adjacent land uses of developing greenway and multimodal connections.

*Deliverables: list of community needs; map identifying facility types and alignment of potential connections; prioritized strategies for increasing multimodal and greenway connections*

### **1.7 Organization, Management, and Financing**

The consultant will develop recommendations to amend township ordinances to better address the goals of the township. The consultant will review existing parks and open space management practices in the township and draft recommendations based on best practices. The consultant will evaluate current recreational programming in the township and provide recommendations for better serving the community. The consultant will provide recommendations for financing future, open space preservation, park and trail development, property acquisition / easements, and recreational programming.

*Deliverables: draft model ordinance revisions; recommendations to official map amendments; recommended best practices for park and open space management; recommendations for improved recreational programming; recommendations for funding*

### **1.8 Implementation Strategies**

The consultant will develop an implementation plan for achieving the vision and mission. The implementation plan will include prioritized projects, phasing, and planning-level cost estimates for capital improvements based on the goals and objectives determined by the Plan Advisory

Committee. The consultant will provide a list of appropriate funding sources and strategies for each project. The consultant will identify priority policy and ordinance updates.

*Deliverables: Implementation plan; cost estimate table; list of potential funding strategies; list of policy and ordinance updates*

## **2.0 Public Participation (Task 9)**

The Consultant will facilitate the stakeholder and public meetings outlined below, which will occur throughout the study process. The Consultant will coordinate with CCPC at project initiation to identify potential dates for the Plan Advisory Committee (PAC) and public meetings. The Consultant will prepare agendas, boards, presentations, and meeting flyers, as necessary. In addition to preparing the meeting materials, the Consultant will summarize the public involvement activities in the Final Report.

*Deliverables: all prepared meeting materials; public outreach summary*

## **2.1 Plan Advisory Committee**

A Plan Advisory Committee (PAC) will be established by the East Whiteland Township Board of Supervisors. The consultant will coordinate a minimum of four (4) PAC meetings to occur at key stages during the planning process. Additional meetings may be scheduled as required to complete the project. The consultant will make all meeting materials will be available for the PAC to review prior to the scheduled meetings.

- Meeting 1 – The first PAC meeting will be used to introduce the PAC to the project and to identify any minor scope of work revisions that would benefit the project. Additionally, the consultant will provide an overview of existing conditions and previous planning studies.
- Meeting 2 – At the second meeting, the consultant will present proposed evaluation criteria and potential properties that could be protected by the township. The PAC will provide input on the identified properties and any additional properties that should be considered.
- Meeting 3 – The consultant will guide the PAC in prioritizing properties for acquisition, protection, or development at the third meeting by providing professional expertise and recommendations.
- Meeting 4 – The fourth PAC meeting will be used to review and finalize the draft document for recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for adoption.

## **2.2 Public Meetings**

The consultant will schedule and facilitate two public meetings to be held at different milestones of the project timeline.

- First Public Meeting – The first public meeting will be held to gain public opinion on which properties are significant and should be protected by the township.
- Second Public Meeting – Draft recommendations will be presented at the second public meeting before the document is finalized.

## **2.3 Public Hearings**

The Open Space, Park, and Recreation Plan will be adopted as an amendment to the East Whiteland Township Comprehensive Plan. The consultant will present the draft plan to be adopted at one public hearing pursuant to the requirements in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

## **2.4 Other Engagement Opportunities**

An innovative public engagement strategy will be developed by the consultant that effectively utilizes available resources to maximize public involvement. The engagement strategy will include interviews with various stakeholders across the township including the Great Valley School District, East Whiteland Business Partnership, Transportation Management Association of Chester County, Chester County Facilities and Parks, and additional stakeholders identified by the Plan Advisory Committee. An online survey will be utilized to maximize the number of people engaged. A project web page will be maintained throughout the duration of the project. The web page will host any relevant materials related to the development of the plan as well as

notification of public meetings. Additional engagement strategies may be developed by the consultant with the direction of the Plan Advisory Committee.

## **2.5 Committees and Board**

The East Whiteland Township Environmental Advisory Council, Historical Commission, Parks & Recreation Board, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors should be encouraged to serve on the PAC. However, in addition a representative of the PAC will be selected to provide project updates at regularly scheduled Township Environmental Advisory Council, Historical Commission, Parks & Recreation Board, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors meetings. Additionally, all project materials will be made available to Township Environmental Advisory Council, Historical

Commission, Parks & Recreation Board, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors for review and comment.

## **3.0 Products**

The consultant will prepare a Draft and Final Report with text, pictures, maps, conceptual plans, and tables to summarize tasks 2-9 as listed below. The Draft and Final Report will be concise and focused on presenting a blueprint for implementation of the recommendations. The consultant will circulate the Draft

Report to the Plan Advisory Committee, post the Draft Report for public Comment and review, and present the Draft Report at a public meeting. The consultant will revise the Draft Report based on Plan Advisory Committee and public comment and produce a Final Report for municipal adoption.

*Task 1 Deliverables: initial project schedule; monthly status reports and invoices; meeting agendas; meeting sign-in sheets; meeting summaries*

*Task 2 Deliverables: summary of opportunities and constraints; base map depicting the existing conditions inventory; photographs from field visit; summary of current ordinance provisions*

*Task 3 Deliverables: Vision and mission statements; list of goals and objectives*

*Task 4 Deliverables: prioritized list of potential parcels to protect; map of potential parcels; list of strategies and evaluation criteria*

*Task 5 Deliverables: list of community needs; prioritized strategies for improving delivery of services*  
*Task 6 Deliverables: list of community needs; map identifying facility types and alignment of potential*

*connections; prioritized strategies for increasing multimodal and greenway connections*

*Task 7 Deliverables: draft model ordinance revisions; recommendations to official map amendments; recommended best practices for park and open space management; recommendations for improved recreational programming; recommendations for funding*

*Task 8 Deliverables: Implementation plan; cost estimate table; list of potential funding strategies; list of policy and ordinance updates*

*Task 9 Deliverables: all prepared meeting materials; public outreach summary*

*Final Project Deliverables: PDF of the Draft Report for Study Advisory Committee and public review; ten hard copies and a PDF of the Final Report*

#### **4.0 Timetable for Completion of Tasks**

*The detailed project timeline will be fully developed by the consultant that is selected through a competitive RFP process administered by East Whiteland Township. Work will begin on or after August 1, 2018, and all work including municipal adoption will be completed on or before July 1, 2019.*

**Any changes to this scope of work shall be approved by the Grant Administrator.**

#### **Proposal Content, Evaluation Criteria and Qualification Requirements**

East Whiteland Township seeks an experienced, professional consultant that has the proven skills, organization, and temperament to develop a publicly supported, specific, and implementable plan. The Township will evaluate consultants based on the following criteria and requirements listed below. **Proposals must address each criterion listed and should not exceed thirty (30) pages in total.**

1. Project Approach

- a. Prospective consulting firms should submit a Project Approach that displays their understanding of the Scope of Work and that includes a proposed project schedule with details on the number of Task Force meetings and public meetings to be held.

2. Consultant Qualifications and Experience

The consulting firm and lead planner selected by East Whiteland Township must possess the necessary experience to undertake the anticipated project and the scope of work. Proposals must include the following elements:

1. A summary of the consulting firm's experience on projects of similar scope and size that have been commissioned by a municipal government and/or Chester County. In particular the summary should demonstrate the consulting firm's experience in the areas listed below:
  - a. Open Space planning and preservation
  - b. Park planning and design
  - c. Greenway and Trail (pedestrian & bicycle) planning
  - d. Concept and Master planning
  - e. Natural Resource planning
  - f. Chester County Grant Administration
  - g. Public Engagement, Presentation and Consensus Building

The consulting firm may also include in this summary a list of projects not directly related to the proposed project, but which demonstrates successful project management including product delivery and municipal client satisfaction. A

minimum of two (2) references and reference contact numbers shall be included with the summary.

2. A description of primary staff resources, including brief resumes and an identification of the lead planner and primary team members to be assigned to the proposed project.
3. A description of the lead planner's qualifications. The consulting firm or planning team shall designate a lead planner to direct and execute the project. The lead planner shall be responsible for the overall execution of the work program; act as the principal contact with the various stakeholders; and attend all task force meetings and public meetings as outlined in the scope of work. The consulting firm shall provide verification that the lead planner or team member meets the following minimum requirements:
  - a. Bachelor's or Master's Degree in Planning, Landscape Architecture, or related field, from an accredited college or university.
  - b. Certified Park and Recreation Professional is required.
  - c. A minimum of five (5) years of professional planning work experience, at least two (2) of which have been in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and proficiency in the specific work program area. This experience shall include primary responsibility for major planning projects, ideally ones which have been commissioned by a municipal government.
  - d. Proven experience in:
    - i. Project management
    - ii. Working with municipal officials to engage the public and hold public meetings
    - iii. Analyzing data, written reports and plans, and assessing consequences of recommended actions
    - iv. Applying elements of the planning process, including problem identification, goal setting, identifying alternatives, implementation, and evaluation
  - e. Membership in the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) is preferred, but not required.

Because the Township received VPP funding from Chester County, the County and Township will review qualifications to mutually determine if the consultant is suited for the proposed project. In all cases, the County will make the final determination of consulting firm and lead planner eligibility. A representative from the County will be available to answer questions regarding the VPP grant requirements and grant monitor's role in the process at the pre-submission briefing meeting.

The Consultant will submit monthly status reports and invoices to East Whiteland Township and the Chester County Planning Commission.

**Cost and Timeframe**

The Township expects that the project will take approximately 12 months to complete. VPP grant requirements mandate that the project be completed within 18 months. East Whiteland Township is seeking a consultant that will be able to complete the project within the time parameters. Each proposal must include a chart that lists the anticipated cost and timeframe for each project task as follows:

<b>Task</b>	<b>Time*</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Task 1 – Project Management		\$
Task 2 – Existing Conditions Inventory and Data Collection		\$
Task 3 – Vision, Goals, and Objectives		\$
Task 4 – Plan for Open Space		\$
Task 5 – Plan for Recreation Facilities and Programming		\$
Task 6 – Plan for Multimodal and Greenway Connections		\$
Task 7 – Organization, Management, and Financing		\$
Task 8 – Implementation Strategies		\$
Task 9 - Public Participation		\$
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$</b>

\*Provide time in weeks or months

The proposal shall provide a not-to-exceed cost for the completion of work outlined above. If, during the duration of the project, the scope of work changes and/or costs exceed the original proposal, the selected firm shall submit a new proposal for the remaining work. No work shall commence on the additional work until the Board of Supervisors and Chester County so authorize.

**Submit with the proposal, WITHIN A SEPARATE SEALED ENVELOPE, one (1) hard copy of your compensation summary, hourly rates (for the lead firm and subconsultants) and all other applicable fees and expenses.**

The Township intends to select the finalists based on the proposed work plan, experience and qualifications before considering cost.

Thank you for taking the time to put together a proposal for this project. If you have questions, please contact Steven Brown at (610) 897-4268 or [sbrown@eastwhiteland.org](mailto:sbrown@eastwhiteland.org).