

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CONSULTANT SERVICES TO DEVELOP THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
PENNSYLVANIA IMPLEMENTABLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

RFP Issued by City Administration:	April 8, 2024
Pre-Submission Meeting Q&A:	April 22, 2024
Due date of Final Questions:	May 3, 2024
RFP Due:	May 17, 2024
Interviews of Finalists:	Week of May 22-26, 2024
Date of Award:	June 12, 2024
Anticipated Date of Completion:	June 6, 2025

I. PURPOSE AND INTENT

The City of Johnstown (herein referred as “City”) is seeking proposals from qualified planning consultants to provide professional services to develop a new, implementable comprehensive plan in compliance with the latest edition of the PA Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) and guided by the planning principles and objectives set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) regarding creating an implementable plan. The implementable comprehensive plan will present a vision for the City’s future and a context for attaining its goals. The plan will be strategic and will outline workable action plans (focusing on the next 1 to 10 years), means of financing, and capacity to implement. The consultant to be hired will provide the full range of planning services necessary to undertake the implementable comprehensive plan.

II. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

All proposers are required to submit ten (10) hard copies and one (1) electronic copy (flash drive) of the proposal shall be submitted in a sealed envelope marked:

“PROPOSAL FOR CITY OF JOHNSTOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN” and addressed to

City of Johnstown
ATTN: Ethan Imhoff, City Manager
401 Main Street
Johnstown, PA 15901

The proposal must be received no later than **12:00 PM** Eastern Standard Time (EST) on **Friday, May 17, 2024**.

All parties are bound by the deadline and location requirements of this RFP. Incomplete submissions will not be accepted. Proposals must be mailed or hand delivered. Faxed or emailed proposals will not be accepted. All proposals shall remain effective subject to the City’s review and approval for a period of ninety (90) days from the deadline of submitting proposals and shall be signed by a duly authorized official. Documents / information submitted in response to this solicitation may be discoverable under Pennsylvania’s Right to Know Law. The City will not be responsible for any costs associated with the oral or written presentation of the proposals.

The City further reserves the right to make such investigations as it deems necessary as to the qualifications of any and all firms submitting proposals. The City reserves the right to re-solicit proposals.

III. PRE-SUBMISSION Q&A

All inquiries concerning this RFP must be submitted in writing or via email addressed to:

City of Johnstown
Attn: Ethan Imhoff, City Manager
401 Main Street
Johnstown, PA 15901
814-539-2504 ext. 103
eimhoff@cojtn.com

There will be an optional pre-application Zoom meeting for questions and answers held on **Tuesday, April 22, 2024 at 10:00 AM EST**. Interested parties should contact Mr. Imhoff by phone or email no later than **Monday, April 21, 2024 at 3:00 PM EST** to be registered for the Zoom meeting.

Deadline for inquiries is **May 3, 2024 at 12:00 PM EST**. Questions received will be compiled and a response will be issued in the form of an addendum that will be posted on the City website, <https://johnstownpa.gov/bids-rfps-and-frqs/> no later than **4:00 pm EST** on **April 8, 2024**. The written specifications will be considered clear and complete unless written attention is called to any apparent discrepancies or incompleteness before the opening of the proposals. Should any alterations to the specifications be made, written addenda will be posted to the website. Addenda will be emailed upon request. To ensure fair consideration of all firms, the City prohibits communication to or with any City elected official, department director, employee, or agent during the submission process with the exception of Mr. Imhoff. No interpretations of the meaning of the RFP documents will be made to any bidder orally. All requests shall be responded to in writing and posted as part of Q&A answers listed on the City website. Communications not adhering to this policy may be grounds for disqualification of proposals.

IV. FORMAT OF PROPOSALS

Submissions shall be made in the following format:

1. Cover sheet with Firm name, Address, Contact information, and Project Title.
2. Letter of Interest (1 page).
3. Executive Summary (1 page).
4. Brief organizational profile, including background and experience of the firm(s). Location of office from which the project management will be performed. Project organization chart including key staff to be assigned and their roles in the project. A

statement shall be included indicating current workload of assigned staff and their capacity to undertake this project in a timely manner.

5. Key Personnel to be utilized on this project and their expertise in developing comprehensive plans, as well as capacity to complete the project in a timely manner. Resumes shall be included here. A listing of the percentage of total project hours worked by each employee in relation to the total project shall be included.
6. Narrative addressing the consultant's understanding of the scope of service/activities to be provided, timeline of completion including a public meeting schedule, and Overall project approach / process to be employed.
7. Equity Lens: Narrative incorporating an equity lens throughout the planning process ensures that the comprehensive plan addresses disparities and prioritizes equitable outcomes for all residents, particularly those from historically marginalized communities.
8. Listing of proposed deliverables for each work step in compliance with the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Code. Consultants must provide a work program for all tasks within each phase of the project.
9. Narrative proposing innovative solutions and approaches to address the City's challenges can lead to more creative and impactful comprehensive plans. This can include leveraging technology, data analytics, and best practices from other municipalities.
10. Consultant firm's experience and references, including Comprehensive Plan (as defined by the PA Municipalities Planning Code) experience and knowledge of Federal, State and local code and regulations. Listing, description, and link to similar projects that have been completed in the past 5 years by the prime consultant and/or proposed subcontractors. Reference list (minimum of three) that may be contacted by the City for recently completed similar projects.
11. Technical and price proposal of services to be provided, including but not limited to estimated time per activity, wages, travel, copies, etc. The Proposal shall include a lump sum fee as well as a detailed budget. The consultant's bid must also include any related expenses, such as travel. The budget for this project shall not exceed \$200,000.00. The budget must include an hourly rate schedule and estimated number of hours to be performed by each staff member assigned to the project. If any work is to be subcontracted, the Proposal should reference the specific areas and costs. Costs for GIS services and all costs related to meetings shall also be specifically listed. Any reimbursable expenses must be clearly indicated, and an estimate provided.
12. Certificate of insurance detailing the amounts of all insurance coverage.

IV. CITY OF JOHNSTOWN GENERAL INFORMATION

The City of Johnstown is located approximately 60 miles east of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, encompassing 5.93 square miles of land and 0.20 square miles of water. The City is divided geographically by two intersecting rivers meeting in its center – the Stoney Creek and Conemaugh Rivers. The City surrounds Dale Borough and in turn the City is surrounded by fourteen municipalities. While there are differences between the municipalities politically and financially, they are intertwined economically and socially. The City of Johnstown is the largest municipality by population in Cambria County.

The City of Johnstown has decreased in size dramatically over the previous 100 years (70,000+ in 1920, and 18,000 in 2020, according to the US Census). The City of Johnstown, one of America's many steel towns (rust belt cities), has worked to overcome the loss of residents, industry, and status that it once had.

Many organizations work today to revitalize the City, such as Vision Together 2025, the Cambria-Somerset Chamber of Commerce, JARI, the Johnstown Redevelopment Authority, and the Cambria County Convention and Visitor's Bureau. These groups work together to identify a new direction for the City and make it marketable to both residents and businesses. City-owned amenities include over two dozen public parks, Sargent's Stadium at the Point, and the Frank J. Pasquerilla Conference Center.

VI. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The consultant or consulting team will provide the planning services necessary for the completion of an implementable Comprehensive Plan for City of Johnstown. The following sections describe the scope of work and specific deliverables. The successful firm shall be responsible for completion of the project up to and including adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

A. Public Engagement and Participation

Attendance and presentations at public meetings, City of Johnstown Planning Commission meetings, Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee meetings, and City of Johnstown Council meetings is required throughout the process. Additional advisory/work group meetings should also occur during the process. The consultant shall assist in organizing two neighborhood meetings in each of the City's fifteen (15) neighborhoods, and must attend at least one public meeting in each neighborhood (City staff may host the other fifteen meetings). Additional attendance is required at three Johnstown Planning Commission meetings, two City Council meetings, and one public hearing before Council in person. The Johnstown Convention and Visitors Bureau (Visit Johnstown) recently completed a branding strategy for the Johnstown region. It will be critical for the selected consultant to understand this strategy, and integrate it into the implementation of plan goals.

There should be a concerted effort to stimulate and obtain public input and response during the

preparation of the draft and to involve appropriate elected officials and municipal staff. The public participation process should be designed to engage as broad an audience as possible and provide real-world challenges and issues that the Comprehensive Plan will address. The consultant shall describe its proposed strategy for public participation and outreach. The public participation plan should at a minimum include:

- a scientific survey of City residents in collaboration with City staff
- a series of neighborhood public meetings
- a series of focus group meetings directed at specific stakeholders

Creativity in outreach efforts is encouraged. In consultation with the Johnstown Steering Committee, the consultant shall develop press releases and may be required to engage local media as part of the public participation process. Public engagement efforts should target stakeholders throughout the City in various settings, such as at community events or social gatherings. Feedback gathered from the public will be summarized and incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

B. Focus Areas

The City of Johnstown continues its mission to provide safe, sustainable, and growing neighborhoods in the City. The Comprehensive Plan should focus on how to implement and achieve plan goals while meeting the requirements of the MPC. Specific focus areas shall include:

1. **Goal Statement and Priority Goals Summary.** A statement of objectives of the municipality concerning its future development, including, but not limited to, the location, character and timing of future development. A summary of five to seven goals (listed below) shall be given with 3-5 achievable objectives to meet those goals.

Priority Goals

- a. **Organized Land Use** - Proposals for improvements in land use, which include provisions for the amount, intensity, character, sustainability and timing of land use proposed for residence, industry, major traffic and transit facilities, utilities, community facilities, public grounds, parks and recreation facilities, flood plains and other areas of special hazards and other similar uses.
- b. **Improvements to Zoning Map and Regulations** - A comprehensive review of the City Zoning Ordinance shall be conducted, recommending improvements to zoning regulations and zoning maps that align with neighborhood and stakeholder goals.
- c. **Housing Stabilization** - A plan to meet the housing needs of present residents and of those individuals and families anticipated to reside in the municipality, which include conservation of presently sound housing, rehabilitation of declining housing in neighborhoods, and the accommodation of expected new housing in different dwelling types and at appropriate densities for households of all income levels.
- d. **City Asset Management** - A plan for City facilities, which shall include municipal buildings, fire and police stations, recreation facilities / areas, and infrastructure. This

item shall also include discussion of short- and long-range plan implementation strategies to assist in capital improvements programming and identification of public funds potentially available.

- e. **Growth of Industry and Residency** - A strategic assessment of the shrinking of the City of Johnstown both via population and industry that has occurred over the previous 100 years. The plan shall provide deliverable and executable plans / goals to attract new industry and residents into the City.

C. Identify, articulate and prioritize goals, objectives, strategies, and performance metrics

The plan document shall be efficient in words, avoid jargon, and be written for use by City Council, Johnstown Planning Commission, City staff, partner groups, and citizens who will implement the plan after completion. The plan must provide workable action plans for focus areas and goals – a series of strategic projects, programs, and initiatives – that emerge from the planning process. The plan will set priorities and a timetable for action based on expected results and ability to finance and implement. Action plans shall include reasonable depth and detail – specific action steps, responsible parties, proposed means of financing, and measurements of performance – to facilitate implementation after the plan is completed. The consultant shall include immediate action recommendations that would provide short-term, visible results and motivate further implementation of the plan.

VII. PROJECT COORDINATION

Throughout the project, coordination will be maintained between the City of Johnstown and the consultant.

The consultant’s approach and method must include, at a minimum:

1. An initial meeting with the planning commission, the steering committee, and City staff to review the project scope and establish the project delivery schedule and public engagement program.
2. Regular meetings with the City of Johnstown Planning Commission and Steering Committee.
3. Input gathering from the public through a variety of techniques to include but not necessarily limited to public workshops and surveys that will result in a wide cross section of people having been consulted.
4. At a minimum, bi-monthly project review meetings/conference calls with key staff.
5. Preparation and presentation of draft and final plans.
6. Presentation of the final plan to the public and the City of Johnstown Council and participation in a public hearing to formally present the plan for approval and adoption if necessary.

VIII. DELIVERABLES

The consultant shall submit the following products to the City of Johnstown in accordance with the approved Project Completion Schedule:

1. Eight (8) printed and bound color copies of the final comprehensive plan and executive summary.
2. Three (3) Complete Electronic Copies of the final plan in PDF format. Files shall be indexed for simplified review. Copies shall be on individual thumb drives.
3. The consultant will be responsible for providing all necessary materials including drafts of the Comprehensive Plan at all meetings, workshops, and hearings. The consultant shall submit electronic copies of all materials, research, data, GIS shapefiles, maps, etc. developed or collected over the course of plan development to the City in editable formats for the City's future use. The software packages used will be agreed to prior to any work being produced. Maps should be developed for easy integration into an ArcGIS Online system.
4. Completed community survey identifying the priorities of each community and the City as a whole.

X. INTERVIEW

The City of Johnstown Steering Committee expects to schedule interviews with any or all of the applicants submitting a proposal, as agreed upon by both parties. Although interviews are expected, the proposal should be comprehensive and complete on its face. The City reserves the right to request clarifying information subsequent to submission of the proposal.

XI. SELECTION CRITERIA

The City of Johnstown will competitively evaluate the proposals, and the Steering Committee will recommend a consultant based on the following criteria for City of Johnstown Council:

- Overall quality and experience of the firm. Municipal planning experience with emphasis on preparing an implantable comprehensive plans in conformance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. (20%)
- Relevant qualifications and experience of the assigned personnel in preparing implementable municipal comprehensive plans and meeting objectives outlined in this RFP. Personnel shall include at least one AICP. Experience working in similar communities in Pennsylvania. (30%)
- Understanding of the Scope of Services, existing conditions, and the objectives of the project. Creativity of ideas and suggestions submitted to enhance and/or amend the scope of work and additional details of the approach and methods to carry out the project. Quality of work plan and organization structure with identification and prioritization of measurable goals, estimated costs and potential sources of financing, actionable timeline, quality of products and support materials. Participation plan reflecting commitment to gaining buy-in from the community and City Council. (30%)
- Proposed costs, with elements clearly defined and priced. Cost-saving techniques. (15%)
- Proximity to the City of Johnstown. (5%)

XII. FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Approximately twenty-five percent of the work on the City of Johnstown Implementable Comprehensive Plan will be funded by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement funds distributed by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As such, any consultant to whom some or all of this project is awarded must comply with all applicable CDBG and HUD regulations. Note that contractors must also have a UEI (Unique Entity Identification) number under the federal System for Award Management (SAM.gov).

Note that each bidder must provide certification that the bidder is not included on any state or federal list of ineligible contractors. Each bidder must agree to comply with the provisions of the Pennsylvania Nondiscrimination Clause and the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964.

XIV. RFP DISCLOSURES

The City of Johnstown reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any non-material irregularities or information in any RFP, and to accept or reject any item or combination of items. The City assumes no responsibility or liability for costs incurred by Proposers in responding to this RFP or in responding to any further request for interviews, additional data, etc. Following award of the contract by City Council, RFP submissions are considered public records that are subject to Pennsylvania's "Right to Know" laws. Materials considered confidential by the Consultant must be clearly identified and include a statement of why said records should not be considered public records.