



Borough of Chambersburg

*A full service municipality in Franklin County
celebrating over 65 years of consumer owned natural gas service
over 120 years of community electric and a
regional wastewater, water, and municipal solid waste utility*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHAMBERSBURG BOROUGH SEEKS TO UPDATE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chambersburg – Last updated in 2008, a Comprehensive Plan, required under State Law, is a comprehensive vision of what will change in the community over the next generation. Likely the most important planning document that a borough can develop, the plan takes years of work, public meetings, input from developers, transportation experts, community groups, and citizens; as well as a long range view of the opportunities and challenges facing any particular municipality.

Approved as a part of the recent 2019 Budget, Chambersburg staff has now drafted the process to accept proposals from consulting firms required to guide this planning process. According to Council President Heath Talhelm, “Chambersburg is seeking the best firm with experience in land use planning, community design, economic analysis, and citizen participation to prepare a Comprehensive Plan update; with a proposed second phase of work to include revision of the Borough land use laws and rules.”

The budget document, which allocated \$100,000 to this overall initiative stated that Town Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission believe this is the appropriate time to update the Comprehensive Plan to “provide direction in the areas of land use, transportation, infrastructure, housing, and community & economic development. The goals and objectives set forth in the plan, developed through engagement and input from citizens, will be implemented by amendments to the appropriate land use codes, capital improvement program, infrastructure investments, and other related programs, ordinances, and policies.”

According to Assistant to the Borough Manager Phil Wolgemuth, “the Borough is seeking an innovative plan with an out-of-the-box approach to the comprehensive planning process. It is the Borough's desire that there be significant and meaningful community participation in preparation of the plan and that the consulting team includes substantial opportunities for citizen involvement throughout the planning process using a variety of methods. It is the hope of Borough officials that the planning effort be a catalyst to jump-start a new future for the Borough and to generate excitement about its development. Borough staff have looked at models of planning successes in other communities where planning efforts have led directly to bold new investment and development in downtowns and neighborhoods, as well as preservation of historic features and open spaces. The Borough's goal is that the Comprehensive Plan update provides an effective means to achieve renewed community vitality, well-being, and pride; and, serves the citizens and its representatives for many years to come.”

Borough Manager Jeffrey Stonehill pointed out that “consultants are permitted to submit proposals that provide full in-house services or submit proposals using a team approach wherein a lead consultant will use select services provided by other firms. A consultant's proposal must reflect the ability to provide a full range of expertise in all areas including, but not limited to, land use planning and zoning; demographic and economic analysis; transportation planning; utility planning; community visioning; urban design; community development; and digital mapping. Additionally, proposals must identify experience with public outreach, facilitation of public meetings, public relations and media campaigns as well as presentation graphics.”

This process, which begins with the selection of the consultant, will take over a year to complete, and will include a dedicated website for citizen input and a series of public meetings.

The Request for Proposal is attached and can also be obtained, along with other planning documents, from the Borough website at website at www.chambersburgpa.gov. Click on the ‘transparency’ link, scroll down to ‘Planning Documents’ and the select ‘comprehensive plan update rfp’.

For more information or questions regarding the Request for Proposal, please contact Guy Shaul, Community and Economic Development Specialist, at 717-251-2446 or gshaul@chambersburgpa.gov.

Chambersburg is a unique community. Chambersburg supplies more services than any other municipality in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In addition to typical town functions, Chambersburg is Pennsylvania's only municipality supplying electric & gas. Chambersburg is 1 of 35 Boroughs to operate a municipal non-profit electric utility. Chambersburg is the largest municipal electric utility in the State, twice as large as the second largest, Ephrata, Lancaster County; and, the only one to operate generation stations. Chambersburg is 1 of 2 municipalities in PA to operate a natural gas utility. The other is Philadelphia, which does not operate an electric utility. Nationally, Chambersburg is 1 of 2,000 communities to have its own electric system and 1 of 800 communities to have a natural gas system but 1 of only about 50 to operate both. Chambersburg manages a regional water system, a regional sanitary sewer system (not through an independent Authority), and a new storm sewer utility; one of the first storm sewer utilities to form under the new Federal mandate to regulate stormwater. Chambersburg currently has 20,360 residents (2012).