

CITY OF BETHLEHEM
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

SUBJECT: Request for Approval by City Council of Contract Award or Contract Price Increase Pursuant to City Ordinance, Article 121.05 (a)

Project or Contract Reference: 2025 44 Northside Alive Plan Elm Street

TO: City Council, all members, and Council Solicitor

FROM: Laura Collins and Sara Satullo

DATE: September 25, 2025

On behalf of the Administration, pursuant to City Ordinances, Article 121.05, I request City Council's approval of the following recommendation of the referenced contract award or price increase.

- Check Type of Contract or Change:

_____ The contract is for over \$50,000 and required to be bid under the Third-Class City Code. We have advertised the above referenced project and received qualified bids. We recommend award of the contract to the bidder identified and for the reasons stated below.

_____ The recommendation is for a price increase of 10% or more for an existing contract over \$50,000 that was previously bid and awarded under the Third-Class City Code.

 X The contract is for the engagement of professional services. We have received a proposal for professional services in connection with above referenced project.

- Is the contract appropriation or price increase included in this year's budget? **X** yes no
- Identify contract funding sources (general fund, grants, loans, etc.....):
009A-92824 & 0304-42151
- The name and address of the recommended Contractor/Professional Service Provider:
WRT, LLC
123 S. Broad Street, Suite 1450
Philadelphia, PA 19109
- Term of contract or estimated completion date, subject to standard extensions:
September 30th 2026

- Description of project or scope of services to be provided:
WRT will lead the development of the updated Northside Plan and will work closely with City staff, Northside Alive Advisory Committees and Residents who will provide feedback for the Plan update.
- State the actual or estimated price to the City or the proposed Department budget allowance for the initial term; and state payment rate per unit of service if applicable:
\$39,960
- Number of renewal term options and duration of each renewal, if any:
None
- Maximum dollar value of all renewals provided for beyond the original term as if all renewals were exercised:
None
- Reasons for recommendation of Administration and Council approval of contract:
WRT developed the original Northside2027 Plan, which has played a key role in the area's success over the past several years. Their familiarity with the neighborhood and access to historical data from the initial plan position them well to deliver cost-effective and insightful work, particularly in demonstrating changes over time. We received two additional quotes for the project and WRT emerged as the most cost-efficient option.

Additional information about project scope and reasons for recommendation:

Bethlehem City Council has offered its support to the Northside Alive neighborhood revitalization program many times since the initiative began in 2017. And that support is reaping many benefits for the community, seen in major projects like the total overhaul of Friendship Park and the conversion of Linden Street to a two-way road; and smaller initiatives like Music in the Park and community yoga classes.

The Northside 2027 plan was completed in 2019, and in February of 2021 the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development approved the City's request to designate the Northside as a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA). This five-year designation creates greater flexibility in the use of federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, allowing the City to target resources to support community revitalization.

It is now time to renew the NRSA designation and update the area's strategic plan. Due to the tremendous success of the Northside Alive program, many of the original plan's goals have been met or are underway. An updated plan will create new community-driven neighborhood goals and better reflect the City's current economic reality. The first Northside plan was developed prior to the affordable housing crisis, when blight was one of the City's major concerns, not affordable housing.

An updated plan will provide the Northside Alive program, and its resident led committees, a blueprint to continue to advance meaningful neighborhood revitalization. It

could potentially serve as the foundation for an application for an Elm Street designation or creating a Neighborhood Partnership Program, similar to the successful model that has existed in South Bethlehem for several decades.

Thus, we are asking Council to support engaging WRT, the firm that completed the original Northside plan, to draft a new five-year strategic plan. WRT was selected as the lowest responsive respondent following a solicitation for proposals. This work will be funded with CDBG and General Fund dollars from the existing Northside Alive allocation in the Community Development budget.

This will again be a community-driven planning process and the upcoming Northside Alive annual meeting, November 6, and the Friendship Park reopening celebration, offer excellent opportunities to engage stakeholders in the process.

Please approve this recommendation by passing the accompanying resolution. A vote of final approval is requested at the first City Council agenda listing of this matter.

By: _____
Department Head

Copies To: Mayor
Director of Administration
Director of Budget and Finance
Law Bureau
Purchasing Bureau
Controller
Project Manager

Attachment: Proposed Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-_____

Authorization for Contract or Amendment under Article 121.05(a)

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Bethlehem that the Mayor and the Controller and/or such other City officials as deemed appropriate by the City Solicitor, are hereby authorized to execute a Contract or Amendment and such other agreements and documents as are deemed by the City Solicitor to be necessary and/or related thereto, with the following named contractor, for the uses and purposes indicated in the supporting Recommendation of Award of Bid or Contract.

1. Name of Contractor: WRT
2. Project or Contract Reference: 2025 44 Northside Alive Plan Elm Street

Sponsored by: /s/ _____

ADOPTED by Council this _____ day of _____, 2025.

/s/ _____
President of Council

ATTEST:

/s/ _____
City Clerk