



CITY OF BETHLEHEM

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**HISTORIC OFFICER CONSULTANT FOR THE
NORTH BETHLEHEM, SOUTH BETHLEHEM AND
MOUNT AIRY LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

Issued: 10/23/2026
Submittal Deadline: 11/13/2026

BACKGROUND

The City of Bethlehem has three local ordinance historic districts including North Bethlehem, South Bethlehem and Mount Airy. They operate under the auspices of the Historic and Architectural Review Board (HARB) and the Historic Conservation Commission (HCC). A Historic Officer administers each commission. The Historic Officer also administers an enforcement program through the City Bureau of Planning and Zoning to ensure compliance with the local historic ordinance provisions.

Bethlehem is also a Certified Local Government (CLG). Therefore, all of our programs must comply with the requirements of the federal CLG program administered through the State of Pennsylvania. The City's Historic Officer must meet the Professional Qualification Standards as required by the CLG program and as described in Attachment A. The Historic Officer will work with the City to ensure compliance with all requirements of the CLG program.

The Historic Officer reports directly to the Director of Planning and Zoning.

OBJECTIVE

The City of Bethlehem desires to retain the services of a consultant to provide advice and assistance as a Historic Officer to the HARB, HCC and City Council for the period January 1, 2027 to December 31, 2027 with the possibility of additional contract renewals for the years 2028 and 2029. Contracts will be assessed annually for each year pending mutual agreement between the City and the consultant.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Historic Officer will provide the following services to the City:

1. Gather information and history on structures and improvements related to HARB, HCC, Mount Airy and City Council reviews. Reports and information shall be submitted to city staff and review board members at least five days prior to a scheduled public meeting;
2. Attend and prepare minutes for all HARB and/or HCC meetings;
3. Provide guidance to the Board or Commission on the limits and scope of authority of historic board or commission, ensuring the motion incorporates appropriate historic recommendations;
4. Record motions and actions of the HARB and/or HCC;
5. Prepare HARB and/or HCC recommendations on Certificate of Appropriateness requests for City Council;

6. Inspect properties in ensure work is being done according to the HARB, HCC and City Council approval;
7. When requested, appear in court as a witness relative to compliance issues facing the City and HARB or HCC;
8. Provide evidence of design review advice;
9. Meet and consult with property owners or applicants prior to application submissions to answer questions or provide guidance, as appropriate;
10. Similar additional duties that may be related to the Historic Officer position, as applicable.

In order to eliminate any potential conflicts of interest, selected historic officers will be required to refrain from professional work within the districts that will later require HARB or HCC review.

INFORMATION AND DATA REQUIRED IN EACH PROPOSAL

All Proposals shall be submitted exclusively in electronic format through PENNBID at <https://pennbid.bonfirehub.com/> no later than November 13th, 2026, at 4:00 PM. Proposals provided by any other means will not be accepted. Incomplete proposals and those received after the specified date and time will not be considered. Hand delivered, mailed, courier, faxed and/or emailed responses will not be accepted. The City will handle proposals confidentially during the pre-award period.

The proposal shall contain responses to the following:

1. Qualifications, capacity and experience of the consultant (See attached Appendix “A” – Professional Qualifications Standards).
2. Identify the key personnel to be assigned to render the services required. Describe their related experience.
3. Describe any support staff that may be available administratively or in instances of absence, etc.
4. The City is proposing a budget of \$50,400 for Historic Officer services for 2027, with \$25,200 allocated for services to the north side Historic Architectural Review Board and \$25,200 allocated for services to the south side Historic Conservation Commission. Responding firms must clarify within the proposal whether the proposal is related to one particular historic review board or both.

FACTORS FOR AWARD

The City will evaluate each written proposal based on the requirements and scope of work outlined in the Request for Proposals. The City may hold interviews for the position as deemed necessary by the City staff. The City of Bethlehem is not responsible for costs incurred by any firm for the costs to prepare a proposal.

CONTACT

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Attachment A

Professional Qualifications Standards

The following requirements are those used by the National Park Service, and have been previously published in the Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61. The qualifications define minimum education and experience required to perform identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment activities. In some cases, additional areas or levels of expertise may be needed, depending on the complexity of the task and the nature of the historic properties involved. In the following definitions, a year of full-time professional experience need not consist of a continuous year of full-time work but may be made up of discontinuous periods of full-time or part-time work adding up to the equivalent of a year of full-time experience.

History

The minimum professional qualifications in history are a graduate degree in history or closely related field; or a bachelor's degree in history or closely related field plus one of the following:

1. At least two years of full-time experience in research, writing, teaching, interpretation, or other demonstrable professional activity with an academic institution, historic organization or agency, museum, or other professional institution; or
2. Substantial contribution through research and publication to the body of scholarly knowledge in the field of history.

Archeology

The minimum professional qualifications in archeology are a graduate degree in archeology, anthropology, or closely related field plus:

1. At least one year of full-time professional experience or equivalent specialized training in archeological research, administration or management;
2. At least four months of supervised field and analytic experience in general North American archeology, and
3. Demonstrated ability to carry research to completion.

In addition to these minimum qualifications, a professional in prehistoric archeology shall have at least one year of full-time professional experience at a supervisory level in the study of archeological resources of the prehistoric period. A professional in historic archeology shall have at least one year of full-time professional experience at a supervisory level in the study of archeological resources of the historic period.

Architectural History

The minimum professional qualifications in architectural history are a graduate degree in architectural history, art history, historic preservation, or closely related field, with coursework in American architectural history, or a bachelor's degree in architectural history, art history, historic preservation or closely related field plus one of the following:

1. At least two years of full-time experience in research, writing, or teaching in American architectural history or restoration architecture with an academic institution, historical organization or agency, museum, or other professional institution; or
2. Substantial contribution through research and publication to the body of scholarly knowledge in the field of American architectural history.

Architecture

The minimum professional qualifications in architecture are a professional degree in architecture plus at least two years of full-time experience in architecture; or a State license to practice architecture.

Historic Architecture

The minimum professional qualifications in historic architecture are a professional degree in architecture or a State license to practice architecture, plus one of the following:

1. At least one year of graduate study in architectural preservation, American architectural history, preservation planning, or closely related field; or
2. At least one year of full-time professional experience on historic preservation projects.

Such graduate study or experience shall include detailed investigations of historic structures, preparation of historic structures research reports, and preparation of plans and specifications for preservation projects.