CITY OF BETHLEHEM
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CONSULTING DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITY CENTER

Issued: 10/14/2026
Submittal Deadline: 11/9/2026

Contact Person:

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The City of Bethlehem, Northampton County, Pennsylvania ("the City"), is seeking to retain services of a qualified and experienced consulting firm to design and engineer the future Southside Community Center. The center is intended to serve as a hub for educational, recreational, cultural, and social services, promoting inclusion, community empowerment, and neighborhood revitalization.

Bethlehem's Southside is a historically diverse and dynamic neighborhood undergoing significant economic and social change. The proposed community center is envisioned as a vibrant and inclusive space that supports youth, families, seniors, and local residents through programming and resources that promote well-being and equity.

In January 2024, the City, with assistance from various stakeholders, conducted a Southside Community Center Feasibility Study[1], which resulted in a preliminary design and layout for the planned center. The goals of this study were to engage the community in meaningful conversations about what is most needed in Southside Bethlehem. This effort included the following:

- Evaluation of existing amenities and how they correspond to the needs.
- Analyze multiple sites to determine an appropriate location for a new community center.
- Perform an economic analysis of the cost of constructing and operating a community center.
- Identify possible funding sources for the center
- Generate momentum to move the project forward

Multiple potential sites were studied and the Mechanic Street Parking Lot was selected as the preferred location. This lot is located between Webster Street and Taylor Street, direction abutting the South Bethlehem Greenway to the South and Mechanic Street to the North.

The facility will ideally be equipped with multipurpose rooms, offices, and both indoor and outdoor recreational space. It is expected to support programming such as after-school activities, basketball, athletics, art and dance classes, job readiness training, health and wellness workshops, arts and culture initiatives, and community meetings.

This project will be funded through a mix of public and private funding sources. The City of Bethlehem has dedicated $2 million to the project. The selected consulting firm must be familiar with public funding source requirements. The design phase of this project will begin expeditiously upon execution of the contract.

[1] Project: South Side Community Center Feasibility Study | City of Bethlehem

2.0 INQUIRIES

All questions or clarifications about the meaning or intent of the Request for Proposals are to be submitted electronically via the "Messages, Public Q&A" feature within PennBid before October 26, 2026. Responses to all inquiries will be issued to all interested parties in PennBid by November 2nd, 2026.

3.0 SCOPE OF WORK

The selected consultant will work with the City and relevant stakeholders, such as the Bethlehem YMCA, the future operator, to refine the conceptual designs and provide professional design/engineering for preliminary and final design, construction documentation, bid documents, and construction-term services.

Focus groups, surveys, and community engagement meetings were conducted to listen and justify the findings of the study and result in a community-driven design.

The desired design elements as heard from the Community Needs Assessment and reflected in the Concept Plan are the following[2]:

- Welcome/ Resource Center
- Gymnasium and Locker Rooms
- Classrooms
- Teen Lounge/Kids Space
- Multi-purpose Room
- Communal Kitchen
- Office Space

Outdoor spaces would include the following[3]:

- Outdoor Play Space
- Community Garden
- Parking for Popups (Food Truck, etc.)

The future Southside Community Center will provide a safe, convenient space with access for users of all ages and abilities, regardless of their accommodation. This emphasizes the needs of those whose needs have not been met through a traditional approach, such as older adults, families with small children, and people living with disabilities. The community center location was prioritized in an area of the city that has historically experienced systemic underinvestment.

[2] See Appendix A: Building Concept: First Level, Building Concept: Second Level

[3] See Appendix A: Building Concept: First Level, Building Concept: View from Greenway, Building Concept: Entrance from Greenway

3.1 Design/Engineering for Construction

Professional services for the Southside Community Center project area include:

- Final Design and Engineering
- Construction Documentation
- Permitting
- Project development meetings
- Project management

Design and Engineering - Final design and documentation for an ADA compliant Community Center building, associated grading and drainage improvements, landscaping, associated signage, site amenities, and utilities, utilizing the existing concept plan to start.

Construction Documentation – Services include: Site visit with the City; development of Drawings, Specifications and permits; 50% Drawing Submission to City and; Project Development Meetings (3); Final Submission to City for Review; and Project Management for this project. Permit applications will be submitted as required by applicable regulations. Plans and specifications will be prepared in accordance with the Bethlehem YMCA and City of Bethlehem standards.

Design/engineering will include the following deliverables:

1. Existing Interior Conditions Plans
2. Proposed Layout Plans
3. Construction Plans and Details
4. Proposed Exterior Plan
5. Electrical Plans
6. Mechanical Plans
7. Plumbing Plans
8. Cost Estimate and Sequence of Construction
9. Technical Specifications
10. Bid Form

Permitting – Consultants will submit a PA DEP permit(s) for this project, **as necessary**, with services including: coordination with City staff for any necessary test pit excavations, site infiltration soil testing, soils report and stormwater management recommendations, and meetings with Northampton County Conservation District, and Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.

The consultant will prepare and submit an Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Plan (E&S), and narrative for this project in accordance with current guidelines as set forth in PA DEP publication “Erosion and Sedimentation Pollution Program Manual” dated March 2000, and any revisions thereto. Consultants will perform a qualitative analysis of the construction impacts and will submit the plan to the City of Bethlehem. Consultants will address all comments and incorporate agreed changes into the final E&S Plan.

Project Development Meetings – Consultants will attend scheduled project meetings with the City throughout the project. At least (3) meetings shall be included in the proposal.

Project Management – Consultants shall be available to the City and outside agencies. Consultant shall specify project manager within proposal.

3.2 Project Bidding

Services shall include the preparation of drawings, technical specifications, and bid forms, coordination with the City for preparation of the front-end specifications and advertisement and administration of the bidding process. Bid documents will be prepared according to potential grant funding requirements. Consultant will attend a Pre-bid meeting and respond to bidder in-meeting and on PennBid questions.

3.3 Construction Term Services

The City Engineering Bureau will provide the majority of the engineering inspection services for this project. However, the proposal shall include a minimum of 40 hours for bidding, pre-construction meetings, progress meetings and inspection as necessary.

Final As-Built drawings shall be submitted at the time of construction completion in accordance with City of Bethlehem and any future external grantor standards.

3.4 Community Engagement

The selected consultant shall assist with at least three (3) outreach events for the Bethlehem community, including creating messaging materials for residents, community organizations, schools, and businesses. This engagement should inform the public of progress prior to the project being constructed.

Translation Services – The selected consultant will have the ability to translate any public-facing materials from English to Spanish including the following, as necessary:

- Physical and digital materials (flyers, boards, graphics, etc.)
- WeBuildBethlehem webpage update content (platform GoVocal)[4]

4.0 PROPOSAL FORMAT AND CONTENT

To facilitate the review and evaluation of the proposals, all proposals should be organized using the following outline format:

4.1 Statement of Qualifications and Experience

Include a brief resume of your firm's background and expertise in projects of a similar nature. The resume shall also include names, special qualifications, and work

[4] https://webuild.bethlehem-pa.gov/en

assignments of your project staff. Include contact information for former clients for whom similar work has been performed.

Include the address and telephone number of your main office and regional or local offices from which the work is to be directed. Also list the names, addresses and telephone numbers of any sub-contractors you intend to use. State the names and qualifications of all persons to be assigned major project involvement, including identifying the project manager.

4.2 Scope and Services

Describe in detail your perception of the work required. Describe how your personnel, equipment, and services will be utilized to accomplish the scope of work.

4.3 Time Schedule

Provide a detailed time schedule to complete the proposed services, including appropriate review time by the City.

4.4 Fee Proposal

Submit a proposed fee and level of effort (man-hours) on a task-by-task basis for each phase listed in the RFP. For each phase provide a specific list of assumptions used to develop the level of effort and fee estimate.

5.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATION

5.1 Evaluation

The evaluation of all proposals will be based, but not limited to, the following criteria:

a. Completeness of the proposal, i.e., the degree to which it responds to all requirements, and requested information contained herein.
b. Project team qualification and professional experience with work of a similar character.
c. Technical approach to the project including suggested work outline and consultant's understanding of the work scope.
d. Completion schedule and commitment to timely completion of the work.
e. Overall cost to the City.

The basis of award of a contract will be on the technical proposal and fee, oral presentation if required, and the firm that, in total, is in the best interest of the City of Bethlehem. Based on the proposals received and the available budget, the City may decide not to execute a contract at all.

In performing the evaluation, only information contained within each firm's proposal will be considered. The City may reject any or all proposals or award the contract where it is found to be in the best interest of the City of Bethlehem.

5.2 Oral Presentation

Firms who submit proposals may be required to make an oral presentation of their proposal. The City will schedule any presentations.

5.3 Cost of Preparation of Proposal

The consultant is responsible for the cost of this proposal. The City assumes no liability for any cost direct or indirect that a consultant may incur during the preparation of a response to the RFP. The City reserves the right to reject all proposals for any reason.

5.4 Reserved Rights and Options

The City reserves and holds, at its sole discretion, the right to:

- Accept any Proposal;
- Reject any or all Proposals;
- Waive any technicalities, informalities, or irregularities;
- Not enter into any transaction;
- Terminate consideration or evaluation of any Proposal at any time, for any reason;
- Suspend, discontinue, and/or terminate the RFP process for any reason;
- Request and/or receive additional information regarding any Proposal;
- Revise, supplement, withdraw or cancel all or part of this RFP for any reason;
- Conduct investigations with respect to the qualifications and experience of Organizations;
- Change the schedule for dates specified in this RFP;
- Request best and final offers; and
- Take any other action affecting the RFP or the RFP process that is in the City's best interest.

No bid award, contract award or contract which is subject to City of Bethlehem Ordinance 121.05 is enforceable or binding against the City without approval of Bethlehem City Council by Resolution under Article 121.05 and furthermore without execution in accordance with the requirements of the Third-Class City Code and the Optional Charter Law, 53 P.S. §§ 41101-41625.

6.0 PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL

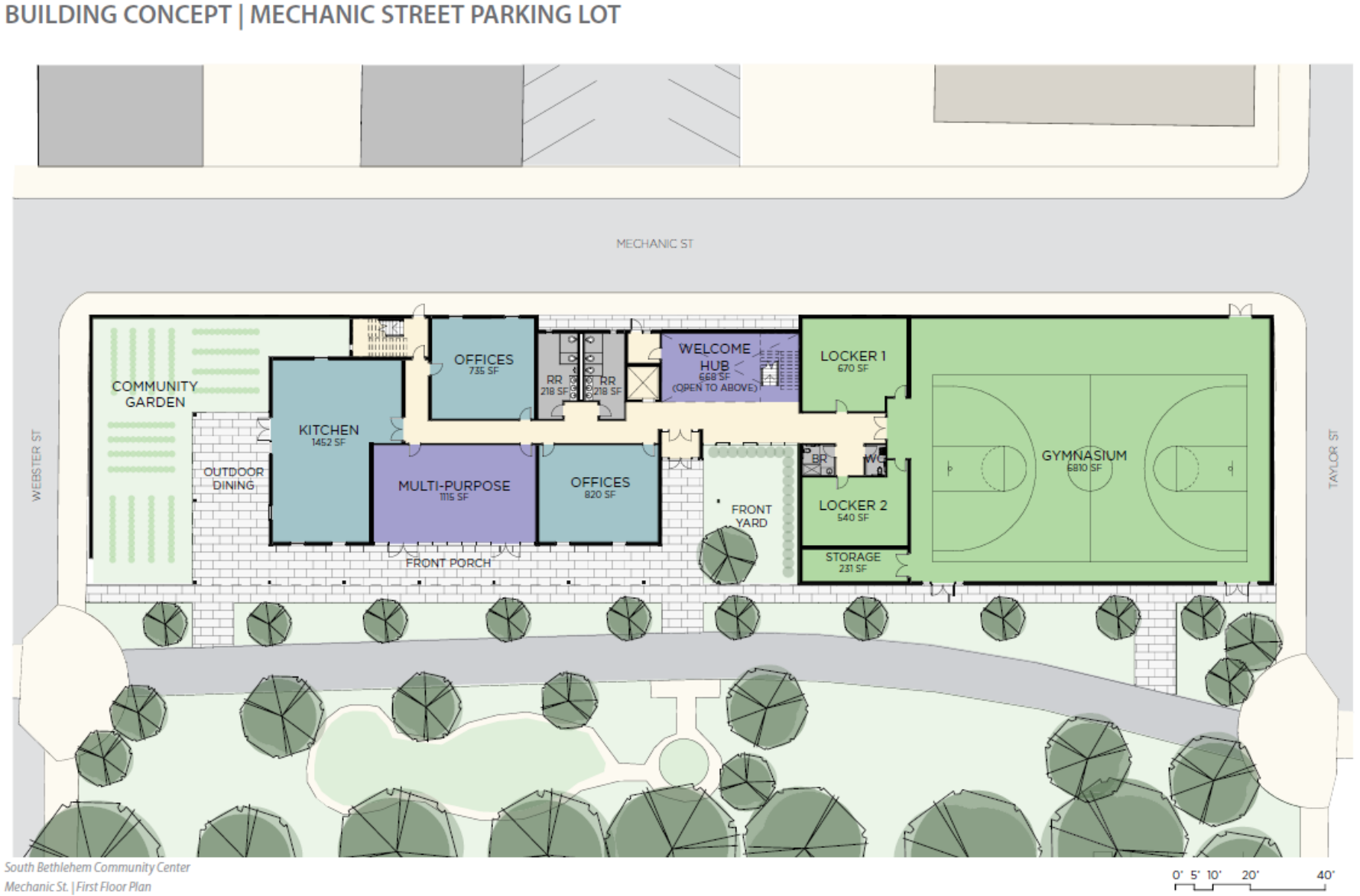
All Proposals shall be submitted exclusively in electronic format through PENNBID at https://pennbid.bonfirehub.com/ no later than November 9th, 2026, at 4:00 PM. Proposals provided by any other means will not be accepted. Incomplete proposals and those received after the specified date and time will 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.

APPENDIX A

Building Concept: First Level
Building Concept: Second Level
Building Concept: View from Greenway
Building Concept: Entrance from Greenway

Building Concept: First Level



Building Concept: Second Level



Building Concept: View from Greenway



South Bethlehem Community Center
View from Greenway

Building Concept: Entrance from Greenway



South Bethlehem Community Center
Entrance from Greenway