

Upper Darby Township
Community & Economic Development
Request for Proposals (RFP)
Consulting Services for Upper Darby Township's 2028 Comprehensive Plan

Introduction

Upper Darby Township is soliciting proposals from qualified professional consultants with experience in comprehensive planning and community engagement to prepare the Township's 2028 Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). All project deliverables must be accomplished no later than April 2028.

Upper Darby is committed to improving the quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors of all backgrounds. The Comprehensive Plan will serve as the Township's primary policy document guiding land use, development, transportation, natural resources and more over the next 10 years.

Upper Darby Township's latest Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2018. The Township desires to update the plan to reflect current development trends, community priorities, and regional planning initiatives.

At a minimum, the following materials must be reviewed by the consultant to provide background information on the Township's previous planning efforts:

- [Upper Darby Township 2018 Comprehensive Plan](#)
- [Destination Downtown Upper Darby Technical Assistance Panel Report](#)
- [Upper Darby Safe Streets for All Action Plan \(SS4A\)](#)
- [Naylor's Run Trail Feasibility Study](#)
- [2026-2030 Five-Year Consolidated Plan](#)

About the Township

It is the mission of Upper Darby Community & Economic Development to guide sustainable land use, development and policy that results in a higher standard of living, enjoyment, and quality of life in Upper Darby Township.

Upper Darby Township is 7.8 square miles, with a population of 86,031 (2024 ACS 1-Year Estimates U.S. Census), making it the 6th largest municipality in Pennsylvania. Upper Darby Township is unique relative to other Delaware County municipalities by virtue of its size and demographics – its population density is much closer to Philadelphia than surrounding Delaware County municipalities. Upper Darby is more racially and culturally diverse than its neighbors,

including Philadelphia, as more than a quarter of Upper Darby residents speak a language other than English at home.

Upper Darby sits just seven miles from the Philadelphia International Airport and 30th Street Amtrak Station. Multi-modal transportation connections are a competitive advantage for Upper Darby, where residents and commuters use the road networks, trains, trolleys and buses for leisure and business. SEPTA's 69th Street Transit Center is the terminus of the Market-Frankford Elevated Rail Line and the beginning of the Norristown High Speed Line and is the eastern destination for the 101 (Media) and 102 (Sharon Hill) Trolley Lines.

Timeline

Monday, July 27, 2026

RFP Released

Thursday, August 6, 2026

Required Meeting (Virtual) at 3:00pm

Wednesday, August 12, 2026

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted via email to CED@upperdarby.org

Wednesday, August 19, 2026

All questions and answers will be provided back to all prospective bidders via email

Friday, August 28, 2026

RFP Proposals Due by 4:00pm

Seven (7) hard copies must be delivered to Upper Darby Township Planning & Zoning, 100 Garrett Road, Upper Darby, PA 19082. A digital submission is also required and may be submitted via thumb drive with the hard copies or sent via email to CED@upperdarby.org. Proposals received after this date or not in the format required will not be considered.

Week of September 21, 2026

Finalist Notifications

Week of October 5, 2026

Finalist Presentations

October 2026

Project Award

Upper Darby Township reserves the right to not award and/or to revise this timeline at any time

Scope of Work

The selected consultant will work collaboratively with Upper Darby Township (UDT) to prepare a comprehensive plan that establishes a shared vision for the Township's future and provides a policy framework to guide growth, development, and investment over the next ten years. The scope of work outlined below identifies the minimum services expected to be completed. Consultants are encouraged to recommend additional tasks they believe will enhance the planning process and final deliverables.

The consultant will educate the steering committee and the public about the comprehensive plan and its importance to the Township, provide effective mechanisms for gathering input on various issues, and engage all involved parties and build consensus throughout all phases of the planning process.

The consultant will be responsible for completing a minimum of the following tasks:

Task 1 – Project Initiation and Administration

The consultant will be responsible for conducting a series of meetings with Upper Darby Township professional staff to detail the project and meeting schedule, refine deliverables, and select steering committee members.

Steering Committee

- In collaboration with professional staff, identify a steering committee that represents diverse perspectives. Steering committee members will be integral to successful information exchange between the Township and community.
- The steering committee will be 7-9 members (in addition to consultant and UDT professional staff).
- Meetings may be in person or virtual, as approved by UDT Community & Economic Development.

Task 2 – Data Collection and Existing Conditions Analysis

The consultant will collect and analyze historic, current, and projected data to evaluate past, present, and future conditions in the Township, including but not limited to:

- Population and demographic trends
- Housing conditions and housing needs
- Existing land use patterns
- Zoning regulations and development patterns
- Economic and employment trends

- Transportation network and mobility issues
- Infrastructure and utilities
- Natural resources and environmental constraints
- Open space

Task 3 – Comprehensive Community Engagement

Community engagement is a core component of the comprehensive planning process. Known as the “World in One Place”, Upper Darby Township is home to a multitude of cultures and diverse populations. The consultant will be responsible for developing and implementing an inclusive and meaningful public engagement campaign that draws participation from a wide variety of groups. Community engagement should reflect the diversity of Upper Darby at every level, and provide opportunities for residents, businesses, community organizations, elected officials, and other stakeholders to develop a shared vision for the Township and contribute to an implementable comprehensive plan.

The consultant will be responsible for completing a minimum of these engagement tasks:

- Developing outreach materials and surveys in both digital and hard copy format in Spanish, Bangla, French and Vietnamese
- Creating outreach materials and online surveys usable through social media and the UDT website
- Interviewing stakeholders, community members and professional staff
- Conducting open houses and various other community outreach events
- Presenting at meetings with community groups, civic associations and organizations
- Creating surveys to be available both online (ESRI Survey123 preferred but alternative platform will be considered) and on paper at the UDT One Center and the UDT Libraries
- Tabling at Upper Darby Community Events, as designated by UDT
- Hosting Community Feedback sessions
- Conducting Public Presentations
- Developing Arc GIS Online Story Maps or equivalent with intractable data and maps

Task 4 – Comprehensive Plan Elements

The comprehensive plan must include at a minimum, the required components of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, including Sections 301–303 relating to municipal comprehensive plans, as well as Upper Darby Township’s areas of priorities:

- A statement of community development goals and objectives that chart the location, character, and timing of future development.

- A plan for land use identifying the amount, intensity, character and timing of land use. Specific needs of Upper Darby include:
 - Zoning Code and Future Land Use Map Update to include transit-oriented development (TOD) and upzoning
 - Determining the most useful definitions of green space and open space and set goals
 - Public space with regards to third spaces including but not limited to recreation, playgrounds, libraries, plazas, trails, etc.
- A plan to meet housing needs of present residents and those families anticipated to live in the municipality as well as accommodating new housing in different dwelling types and at appropriate densities for households of all income levels. Specific needs of Upper Darby include:
 - Affordability, homeownership, diversity in housing stock, and the prevention of homelessness
- A transportation plan. Specific needs of Upper Darby include:
 - Transit and transportation building upon the Township's existing transit network to create a more connected, efficient, and accessible transportation system that supports future growth and distinguishes the Township as a regional mobility hub
- A community facilities plan.
- A statement of the interrelationships among the various plan components which estimates the environmental, energy conservation, fiscal, economic development and social consequences on the municipality. Specific needs of Upper Darby include:
 - Economic development with regards to diversification of revenue streams, commercial corridor revitalization, business improvement districts and tax incentives
 - Youth populations and workforce development
- A discussion of short- and long-range plans implementation strategies. Specific needs of Upper Darby include:
 - The role of boards, commissions, and committees, as it relates to the comprehensive plan.
- A statement indicating that existing and proposed development is compatible with plans and development in contiguous municipalities. This statement should indicate that existing and proposed development is generally consistent with the objectives and plans of the county comprehensive plan.
- A plan for the protection of natural and historic resources.

Task 5 – Implementation Strategy

The Comprehensive Plan must include an accountable implementation plan that identifies short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals and recommendations. This will include but is not limited to:

- An implementation matrix that identifies action items and a timeline
- Future staffing and organizational recommendations
- Benchmarks, performance measures and implementation metrics
- Monitoring and reporting frameworks
- Partnership opportunities

Deliverables and Submission Requirements

The Consultant shall provide all draft and final deliverables in both digital and, when requested, printed formats.

At a minimum:

- **Editable Documents:** All draft and final narrative documents shall be submitted in a fully editable Microsoft Word (.docx) format. PDFs may be provided for review purposes but shall not replace the editable Word version.
- **Spreadsheets and Data:** Tables, financial information, schedules, inventories, and datasets shall be provided in Microsoft Excel (.xlsx) format with formulas intact where applicable.
- **Presentations:** Presentation materials shall be submitted in editable Microsoft PowerPoint (.pptx) format.
- **Maps and Graphics:** Maps, figures, infographics, and other graphic materials shall be provided as high-resolution PDF files for printing and in their original editable source formats (e.g., Adobe Illustrator, ArcGIS, or other native software files, as applicable).
- **GIS Data:** Spatial data shall be provided in ESRI-compatible formats, including geodatabases, shapefiles, layer packages, or other formats approved by the Township. All GIS data shall include associated metadata and projection information.
- **Images:** Photographs shall be provided as high-resolution JPEG or PNG files.
- **Public Engagement Materials:** Surveys, meeting materials, handouts, display boards, and outreach documents shall be provided in editable formats suitable for future Township use and modification (may be required to be converted to PDF, JPEG, PNG, or TIFF).

Draft deliverables shall be submitted electronically to the Township for review and comment. The Consultant shall revise documents based on Township comments and resubmit updated drafts until approved.

Final deliverables shall incorporate all Township comments and be adopted by Township Council. Deliverables shall be submitted electronically in both editable native file formats and searchable PDF formats. Upon project completion, the Consultant shall provide all source files, working files, datasets, graphics, and supporting materials produced under this agreement. All files must be named and organized in accordance with the agreed scope of work. Ownership of all deliverables shall transfer to the Township upon final acceptance and payment, and the Township shall have unrestricted rights to use, reproduce, modify, and distribute the materials for public purposes.

Thirty (30) bound hard copies of the final Comprehensive Plan shall be provided to the Township.

Qualifications

In order to qualify to work on the proposed project, the successful bidder shall have these qualifications: :

- Experience in preparing comprehensive plans in accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) for municipalities of a comparable size and character.
- Successful implementation of comprehensive plans of similar scope and complexity that resulted in new policies, programs and capital improvements.
- Expertise in designing and facilitating comprehensive community engagement, especially in underserved and non-English speaking communities.
- Demonstrated project management experience with the ability to complete projects on schedule and within budget.

Proposal Organization and Required Information

The proposal must include:

- Overview/scope of work to convey the consultant(s) understanding of the study objectives and requirements
- A detailed project schedule identifying key milestones and deliverables for the comprehensive plan, based on introduction of the final plan to Upper Darby Township Council no later than the first Council meeting of April 2028.

- Timeline of Deliverables
- Detailed scope of Township resources and staff involvement needed
- Description of consulting team to include a listing of all team contractors and/or subcontractors with descriptions of qualifications and experience
- Plan of work and technical approach, which is a description of the proposed course and sequence of action or tasks including methodologies and a time-phased statement of project milestones
- Staff-time breakdown/proposed site visits and meeting schedule to include a breakdown of the estimated staff time for each task outlined in the Plan of work including proposed site visits with the chargeable rates for each staff person
- References, a minimum of three for similar studies, include summary of the study and name, address, email, and telephone number of persons to contact

Cost Proposal

- Cost proposal must be submitted separately from the technical proposal
- Be inclusive of all costs for accomplishing the scope of work detailed by section:
 - a. Project Initiation and Administration
 - b. Data Collection and Existing Conditions Analysis
 - c. Comprehensive Community Engagement
 - d. Comprehensive Plan Elements
 - e. Implementation Strategy
- List of anticipated costs not covered by this proposal
- Process for change orders
- Include the name, title, address, email and telephone number of the individual with authority to negotiate and contractually bind the bidder to an agreement. The proposal must be signed by a person authorized to negotiate and execute contracts on behalf of the Consultant(s) or company and must be binding for 90 days.

Criteria for Evaluation

- Upper Darby Township is responsible for evaluating and selecting the consultant and for determining goals and objectives. Criteria have been established to guide the evaluation of each proposal.
- Negotiations and award of an agreement will be to the consultant that provides the most advantageous proposal, all things considered. Upper Darby Township reserves the right to reject all proposals.
- Consultants will be evaluated by a selection committee and based on the responsiveness and quality of the proposal, technical quality of the work plan and methodology, relevant

experiences and qualifications of the consulting team, quality of the references, and feasibility and completeness of the proposed budget.

- The top ranked consultants may be asked to make an oral presentation to representatives of Upper Darby Township. It is expected that the consultant's lead team member will take part in any oral presentation. Primary criteria are as follows:
 - Previous experience developing comprehensive plans for comparable municipalities.
 - Demonstrated understanding of the project.
 - This project requires the applicant to work closely with local government officials, the local business community, the community, and the general public. The quality of written, oral, and graphic communication skills of the applicant will be a consideration.