

## **Request for Proposals – Planning in Pennsylvania 101 Course**

The Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute (PMPEI) seeks qualified individuals or firms to assist it in developing new course content for certain educational services it provides.

### **Section 1. Project Purpose and Background**

The PMPEI, founded in 1992, is the leading provider of educational courses in planning, land development and related subject matters to municipal and county officials and staff in Pennsylvania. Through its educational offerings, PMPEI registers around 1,200 students on average per year. PMPEI is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit and is overseen by a board of directors consisting of professional planners and municipal management staff.

Currently, PMPEI provides a ten-hour in-person course on the basics of planning and land development in Pennsylvania. This fee-based copyrighted course is team-taught by two trained professionals and includes a course handbook for participants, an instructor handbook and a presentation slide deck. The target audiences for all of PMPEI's courses are newly-appointed and existing planning commissioners and elected officials, new municipal staff and the general public. The course is currently offered over 3 nights.

The PMPEI Board has determined that this in-person course needs to be replaced with new course material and a different approach to providing the material to our target audiences. This new course needs to be delivered in a three (3) hour time frame, be able to be delivered in an on-line, synchronous format as well as in-person and team-taught.

Consequently, the Board is seeking a consultant with experience in municipal planning in Pennsylvania, developing new course content, graphic design and adult education to develop a new course, including a handbook for instructors, a handbook for participants and an accompanying presentation slide deck. This new course should be designed to be an entry-level course for adult learners that will present the fundamentals of planning and land development in Pennsylvania, including enabling legislation, the role of the planning commission and key municipal documents. It is anticipated that PMPEI will develop future course content that will be built upon this basic course.

All deliverables produced through an agreement per this request will be owned by PMPEI for advancing its educational mission, including rights to revise materials as needed.

### **Section 2. Scope of Work**

The PMPEI Board desires a person or team that can produce new course content, suitable for adult learners, that introduces participants to the essentials of planning and land development in Pennsylvania, that includes interactive activities and graphically appealing

presentation slides that will engage and educate local and county officials and staff, as well as any members of the public that may choose to take the course. The new course will be delivered in a single three-hour format (including a short break for participants), either in-person or virtually, with a team of two instructors.

The work will be undertaken under the guidance of the PMPEI Board.

A suggested outline of course content is provided in this RFP, however proposers are encouraged to suggest alternatives that provide the same content and meet the purposes of this RFP.

### Guiding Principles

Pennsylvania land development and land use, regulated primarily by the Municipalities Planning Code and case law, has unique aspects and processes that government officials and staff must understand in order to properly manage it. The elected and appointed government officials that are charged with overseeing land development and land use are volunteers, often with little or no background or training in planning, running public meetings, or working with land developers or landowners. This new course must recognize these factors and provide a consistent and comprehensive approach to basic planning that can be presented across the state, in townships, boroughs, cities and counties that are subject to the MPC.

### Project Deliverables

The chosen consultant will develop and deliver to the PMPEI Board the following:

1. An instructor's handbook to provide instructors with the necessary background and explanatory information to deliver the course content, in a Word © format, suitable for mass reproduction
2. A presentation slide deck, in a PowerPoint © format, with graphically appealing content including illustrative examples of specific portions of the course content
3. A course participant handbook which will be distributed to course participants. This handbook should include presentation slide deck images, portions of the MPC or other relevant state laws such as the Sunshine Act, as appropriate, and any interactive exercises, in a Word © format suitable for mass reproduction.
4. Options for an interactive exercise to be undertaken during the delivery of the course of up to ten (10) minutes each.
5. Interactive polls for student engagement in the course's online version

Suggested Outline for Course (with suggested amount of time per section, not including interactive activities)

- Overview of Local PA Government (20 min)
  - Types of local government (including counties)
  - positions within local government/structure of local government
- What is planning? (20 min)
  - Purposes of planning
  - Police power
  - Planning as evidence-based
- Planning in Pennsylvania (30 min)
  - Municipalities Planning Code
  - Relationship of MPC to other state laws and case law
  - Key chapters
- Structure/authority of the Planning Agency (30 min)
  - Role of Planning Agency in planning and land development
  - Different types of Planning Agencies
  - Basic organization
    - Membership
    - Best practices for operating – e.g. agenda, Annual Report, effective meetings, Sunshine Act
- Comprehensive plans (30 min)
  - Foundational document by which planning transpires.
    - Creates community vision and prescribes planning tools to be utilized to realize the vision
    - Can be used to “sell” community to businesses and in funding opportunities
    - Relationship between Comprehensive Plan and other planning tools
  - MPC requirements for creating/updating
  - Elements as prescribed by MPC
  - Current trends – e.g. implementable comprehensive plans, multi-municipal
  - Review of specific examples of plan elements from real-life comp plans
- Overview of tools available to implement the Comprehensive Plan (30 min)
  - Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance
  - Zoning Ordinance
  - Official Map
  - Municipal budget
  - Other tools

- Interactive Exercise: tying it all together – Present complex problem for group discussion involving a public meeting, land development, and comprehensive plan implications. Exercise is to reiterate and reenforce key concepts covered in the course.

### Project Timeline

Upon notice to proceed by the Board, the project shall be completed within six (6) months. The consultant shall propose a task-by-task project schedule.

### Budget

The budget for this project is \$8,000.00.

## **Section 3. Consultant Qualifications**

The consultant shall provide a summary of qualifications and experience relevant to this project. The individual or team must have a skill set that includes:

- Strong understanding of planning in Pennsylvania
- Direct municipal planning/zoning experience
- Course development experience
- Educating adult learners experience
- Strong graphic skills

## **Section 4. Required Submittals**

### Proposal submission

A copy of the proposal shall be submitted to Danielle Papinchak, by 11:59PM on Friday, September 12, 2025 via email address [dbaker@boroughs.org](mailto:dbaker@boroughs.org). with subject heading titled: “Proposal for Planning 101 Course”.

### Submission Requirements

All proposals shall include the name of all persons that will be working on the project, their role for the project, their hourly rate and the number of hours to be spent on this project. A total not-to-exceed cost and timeline for the project shall be submitted. A project manager shall be identified who will be the primary point of contact for this project.

Samples of previous work that are relevant to this project may be attached as separate documents.

## **Section 5. Proposal Evaluation**

The PMPEI Board will use the following criteria in evaluating the proposals:

- Understanding of the project purpose and need
- Relevant qualifications and experience
- Responsiveness to this RFP