

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
North Pocono (NP) Planning Association
Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan Development and Zoning Ordinances Update

I. Project Description

A. Purpose

The County of Lackawanna, on behalf of the eight (8) participating municipalities of the regional planning association organized as the North Pocono Planning Association (NP), is inviting qualified professionals to submit a written proposal in response to this Request for Proposals to provide consulting services for the purpose of developing a multi-municipal comprehensive plan and updating each municipality's zoning ordinance and zoning map in general consistency with the multi-municipal plan. The County of Lackawanna, through its Department of Planning & Economic Development, is coordinating and administering this project. It is the third regional planning effort of this kind in Lackawanna County.

B. North Pocono Background

The eight participating municipalities of North Pocono are in southeastern Lackawanna County and include the Borough of Moscow; and the Townships of Covington, Elmhurst, Jefferson, Madison, Roaring Brook, Spring Brook, and Thornhurst. They represent a mix of bedroom and rural communities with a 2020 population of 17,342 and an area of 162.9 square miles.

Specific information for each participating municipality is as follows:

		2020 Population	Sq. Miles	Current Comp Plan	Current Zoning
1.	Borough of Moscow	2,039	2.8	None	2021
2.	Covington Township	2,198	23.8	2007	2007
3.	Elmhurst Township	842	2.0	2011	2011
4.	Jefferson Township	3,765	34.7	2007	2021
5.	Madison Township	2,469	17.3	2007	2009
6.	Roaring Brook Township	2,273	23.1	None	2018
7.	Spring Brook Township	2,748	35.6	2015	2012
8.	Thornhurst Township	1,008	23.6	None	1995

C. Expectations

The NP plan must be inclusive, innovative, and implementable in its attempt to address the concerns, challenges, and changes that have taken place over the past 20 years while crafting resilient strategies for regional economic development, mixed types of residential development, and open space and agricultural preservation.

In addition to the zoning ordinances, current planning documents for the area include Lackawanna-Luzerne Bi-County Comprehensive Plan, the Lackawanna-Luzerne Open Space, Greenways, and Outdoor Recreation Master Plan, the Lackawanna County Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the Lackawanna-Luzerne MPO Long-Range Transportation Plan. (All documents are available at www.lackawannacounty.org)

Topics to be discussed in the plan should include:

- Retaining the character of the region's historical assets and the appeal of Moscow Borough's Main Street district.
- Developing strategies such as traditional neighborhood development, planned development zones, and preservation of open space and agricultural lands
- Transportation opportunities, including multimodal opportunities for increased bike and pedestrian use.
- Planning for the burgeoning warehousing/distribution industry and freight movement.
- Planning for medical marijuana growers/processors and distributors.
- Strategic opportunities to address and plan for recreational assets, green energy initiatives, and electric vehicles.

II. Scope of Work

The County of Lackawanna reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to select proposals that it deems to be in the best interest of the NP municipalities. All firms submitting proposals are bound by the deadlines and requirements of this RFP. All proposals shall remain in effect subject to the County's review and approval for a period of sixty (60) days from the deadline for submitting proposals. Any exceptions or deviations from the scope of work shall be noted and explained in the proposal.

The following scope of services describes the minimum content of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances and although the scope of work is outlined below, each Consultant is encouraged to structure a scope of services and project timeline in a manner considered most appropriate to accomplish the identified objectives. A detailed scope of services will be included in the contract.

The staff of the Lackawanna County Department of Planning and Economic Development and a NP Planning Committee (comprised of representatives from all eight municipalities) will be involved in assisting the consultant both to facilitate the process and to keep costs down. The County will assist in arranging and advertising all public meetings. The County staff and the Planning Committee will work closely with the consultant in gathering information and in reviewing any work products. The consultant will also work with the local municipal planning commissions and appropriate officials to determine the individual needs and requirements of each municipality.

Unless specifically noted otherwise, the consultant shall be responsible for performing all the following tasks. Use of a local planning consultant or agency and minority or women-owned business enterprises through a subcontract is strongly encouraged.

The Consultant will prepare the regional, multi-municipal comprehensive plan, and eight (8) comprehensively revised zoning ordinances and zoning maps, one for each municipality in the NP group.

- A. Research and Analysis** – the consultant shall become familiar with the current municipal comprehensive plans and appropriate county planning documents. The consultant will conduct fieldwork to become familiar with all areas of the NP communities. The consultant will analyze the current ordinances of the eight communities and prepare a discussion guide that describes major issues that need to be addressed.
- B. Meetings** – the consultant’s fee shall include attending twelve (12) Planning Committee meetings, and a minimum of six (6) workshops, meetings, and/or hearings with officials of each municipality (Total of 48). A mix of in-person and virtual meetings are acceptable; however, virtual meetings shall be limited to three (3) Planning Committee meetings and two (2) workshops, meetings, and/or hearings with officials of each municipality. The cost of any additional meetings shall be provided, in the event the Planning Committee or a municipality requests attendance by the consultant.
- C. Work Plan** – the consultant shall prepare a draft work plan including a project timeline that includes such items as necessary background research, detailed schedule of meeting dates and milestone dates, document delivery dates and designated review periods, public hearings, and anticipated formal adoptions.

The comprehensive plan should be an [“implementable plan” following principles and keys](#) currently promoted by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development.

The consultant’s work and the comprehensive plan document should be organized based on the municipalities’ priorities or related goals or themes that emerge from the planning process, not based on a traditional template of land use plan, housing plan, transportation plan, etc. The plan document should be efficient in words, avoid jargon, and be written for use by the municipalities, partner groups, and citizens who will implement the plan after completion.

The plan should provide workable action plans for top recommendations – a series of strategic projects, programs, and initiatives – that emerge from the planning process. The plan should set priorities and a timetable for action based on expected results and ability to finance and carry out. Action plans should include reasonable depth and detail – specific action steps, responsible parties, estimated costs, and proposed means of

financing – to facilitate implementation after the plan is completed. The consultant is asked to include some immediate action recommendations that would provide short-term, visible results and motivate further implementation of the plan.

The consultant will help the municipalities recruit partners – organizations, businesses, and individuals with expertise and resources to be involved in the plan. The plan process should invite their ideas for recommendations and action plans and invite partners to take roles in implementing the plan.

The consultant should facilitate a plan process whereby the communities “own” the plan, and the elected officials and community leaders are spokespersons for the plan and have a consensus commitment to implement it. There should be effective means within the project budget to obtain public vision and aspirations for their community. There should be involvement of elected officials to ensure their understanding and acceptance as the plan proceeds from issues to ideas to action plans.

The zoning ordinances shall be well organized, internally consistent, and understandable. While each municipality will decide which types of zoning district classifications and uses will be allowed and how they will be regulated, the format of each ordinance shall be consistent with that of all the ordinances in the project area.

The zoning ordinances shall be prepared in compliance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and other applicable laws and regulations of federal, state, county, and local agencies.

The zoning ordinances shall be prepared using innovative, up-to-date, and sound planning principles.

All comprehensive plan and zoning maps shall be prepared in color and each map shall be consistently formatted with that of all the maps in the project area. The Lackawanna County GIS Coordinator will be able to assist the consultant in providing data layers for the development of the maps.

D. Deliverables

1. The consultant shall submit five (5) copies of all drafts of the comprehensive plan to each respective municipality as well as a PDF copy. A PDF copy of the draft plan shall also be provided to the Lackawanna County Planning Department. The adopted plan shall be provided to each municipality and the County Planning Department in a PDF and Word version.
2. The consultant will be responsible for creating a Zoning Ordinance for each NP municipality based on the recommendations received throughout the process.

3. The finished product will be clear and concise, avoiding extensive legal and technical language.
 4. The consultant shall prepare an initial, revised, and final draft of the zoning text and a readable, color zoning map.
 5. The consultant shall submit five (5) copies of all drafts of the ordinances and maps to each respective municipality as well as a PDF copy. A PDF copy of each draft ordinance and map shall also be provided to the Lackawanna County Planning Department. The adopted ordinance shall be provided to each municipality and the County Planning Department in a PDF and Word version, and an ArcView version of each adopted zoning map shall be provided to the County GIS Coordinator.
 6. The consultant shall submit two (2) 24" x 36" official paper copies of each adopted zoning map.
- E. Project Completion Schedule** – the consultant shall provide a complete final draft of the comprehensive plan within twelve (12) months after the signing of the contract, and complete final drafts of each zoning ordinance and map within twenty-eight (28) months after the signing of the contract.
- F. Professional Fees** – the consultant's fee shall include all expenses of the consultant. Lackawanna County has been awarded MAP funding from the PA Department of Economic Development in support of the development of a comprehensive plan and updated zoning ordinances. The total project cost shall not exceed \$145,000.

III. Proposal Submission

The following information shall be contained in the proposal package, in a bound, 8-1/2" x 11" document, double-sided, with normal margins [one inch (1") top, bottom and each side]:

- A. Cover Letter** – a cover letter shall be provided stating why the consultant is best suited to provide the desired service to Lackawanna County and the NP communities. This letter should outline the firm's understanding of the project. The letter shall identify the lead firm, contact person, project manager, and key staff members assigned to the project. Contact information shall be provided for the primary contact person. (Limit 2 pages)
- B. Draft Work Plan** – a detailed work plan shall be provided. The consultant must describe how they intend to accomplish the required work. (Limit 3 pages)
- C. Project Timeline** – a project timeline including necessary background research, detailed schedule of meeting dates and milestone dates, document delivery dates and

designated review periods, public hearing dates, and anticipated adoption dates shall be provided. (Limit 2 pages). It is expected that the consultant will complete all tasks and present relevant reports, products, and recommendations within twenty-eight (28) months of execution of a contract.

D. Financial Statement – a detailed financial schedule including hourly rates of all key individuals assigned to the project, a financial breakdown for individual tasks, mileage, and travel charges, printing, mailing, and other fees/charges shall be provided. (Limit 2 pages)

E. Statement of Qualifications – the firm’s qualifications with emphasis on related work experience shall be described. (Limit 8 pages, including resumes) The Planning Committee will evaluate the firm considering the following criteria (not listed in any particular order):

1. Depth of Experience – describe comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, and other pertinent ordinances and planning documents your firm has prepared in the last three (3) years. One (1) sample comprehensive plan and one (1) sample zoning ordinance shall be made available to the Planning Committee.
2. Years of Experience – describe the years of experience of the project manager assigned to the project as well as the years of experience for the key employees assigned to the project. Include resumes of the key employees assigned to the project. It is expected that the assigned employees will remain consistent throughout the project.
3. Technical Experience – demonstrate professional experience and proven record of accomplishments in the preparation of planning documents and public participation.
4. General Knowledge – demonstrate an overall knowledge of Lackawanna County and the NP municipalities, as well as a clear understanding of the overall objectives in completing the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinances.
5. Communication Skills – describe public facilitation capabilities and experience working with the public, work groups, and community officials including oral and visual presentations as well as ability to listen and to be flexible.
6. Proximity to Lackawanna County – demonstrate ability to project high level of direct interaction and communication anticipated between the consultant and Lackawanna County and the NP communities based on proximity to the County.

7. *Comprehensive Requirements* – provide detailed analysis for line items including work tasks as well as costs associated with printing, mailing, mileage, travel charges, and other fees/charges.
 8. *Timeframe* – demonstrate the ability to complete the project within the required timeframe.
 9. *Potential Conflicts of Interest* – identify any potential conflicts of interest for the consultant and/or sub-consultants.
- F. Approach** – provide a detailed description of the firm’s approach to the project broken down by task. Included in this section may be a discussion of any substantive or innovative ideas used in any similar projects, which may be applicable to this project. (Limit 2 pages)
- G. Deliverables** – the type and number of copies used to provide detailed information during the process shall be identified. The type and number of copies of summaries, guides, drafts, and final documents shall be described. (Limit 1 page)
- H. References** – the consultant must provide five (5) references of related clients including contact names, telephone numbers, and email addresses. The County will conduct reference checks to determine quality of past performance, communication skills and the ability to perform assigned tasks in a timely and accurate manner. (Limit 1 page)
- I. Compensation** – the total project budget shall be based on the identified tasks outlined in the work plan. The budget shall include all anticipated costs including but not limited to meeting attendance and facilitation, correspondence and staff report preparation, documents preparation and production, and any necessary travel time and other expenses.

The consultant shall provide an hourly service fee schedule for all professionals, technicians, and support staff assigned to the contract. The hourly service fee schedule shall reflect the rate schedule for 2025, 2026, and 2027.

The consultant shall provide a travel time and expense rate schedule for all professionals, technicians, and support staff assigned to the contract. The travel time and expense rate fee schedule shall reflect the rate schedule for 2025, 2026, and 2027.

(Limit 2 pages)

- J. General Requirements** – interested consultants shall submit a proposal package to Lackawanna County as follows:
1. Twelve (12) copies of the complete proposal and one (1) USB drive with the proposal in PDF format must be submitted in a sealed envelope with the name of

the consultant submitting the proposal clearly marked on the outside of the envelope. The sealed envelope shall be clearly marked "North Pocono Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances RFP."

2. A separate sealed envelope must be submitted with the Bid Sheet attached at the end of this RFP. The envelope shall be clearly marked "North Pocono Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances Bid Sheet."
3. The proposal and bid sheet must be submitted to Mary Liz Donato, Planning Department Manager, Lackawanna County Dept. of Planning and Economic Development, 123 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton PA 18503 by **10:00 AM, EST, Friday, November 1, 2024.**

It is the County's intention to comply with the following proposal timeline:

Request for Proposals released:	SEPTEMBER 27, 2024
Deadline for questions:	OCTOBER 16, 2024
County responses to all questions/addendums:	OCTOBER 23, 2024
Responses for RFP/bids are due by 10:00 AM on	NOVEMBER 1, 2024

All questions regarding the RFP shall be submitted by email by 4 PM on OCTOBER 16, 2024. Questions shall be submitted to the County contact named above at donatoml@lackawannacounty.org.

NOTE: These dates represent a tentative schedule of events. The County reserves the right to modify these dates at any time, with appropriate notice to prospective Respondents through notification by letter, email and/or posting on the County webpage.

4. Proposals and bid sheets received after the above-specified date and time will not be accepted. Proposals and bid sheets submitted by fax, telephone, or email will not be accepted.
5. All costs related to the preparation of the proposals shall be borne solely by the consulting submitting such proposal. The County assumes no responsibility for the cost associated with preparation of the proposal.
6. Proposals shall become the property of Lackawanna County and will not be returned to the consultant.

IV. Evaluation of Proposals

All proposals will be evaluated based on the technical and professional expertise and related work experience of the consultant, the proposed method and procedures for completion of the

work, the understanding of the goals and objectives, the ability to moderate public participation and the cost for completion of the work.

The Planning Committee will review the proposals and reserves the right to conduct interviews with all or some of the consultants. If interviews are conducted by the Planning Committee, key staff assigned to the contract are expected to attend the interview in-person. The following factors will be considered by the Planning Committee during the review process of the proposal and will be weighted as follows:

- Narrative describing interest in undertaking the project and the unique qualifications of the firm. (5%)
- Past record of performance with regards to work quality, management, and ability to meet schedules. (40%)
- Relevant experience in multi-municipal planning and zoning projects, knowledge of the PA Municipalities Planning Code, and expertise of personnel, sufficiency of appropriate staffing, subcontractors, and ability to provide a range of services that may be required. (40%)
- Project Management skills and ability to work effectively with the County Planning Staff, the Planning Committee, and local municipal officials. (15%)

Weighted Total = 100%

The Lackawanna County Board of Commissioners will be bound by the recommendation of the Planning Committee in making the final decision regarding consultant selection but reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted. It is anticipated that consultant selection will occur within seventy-five (75) days of the RFP deadline. A notice to proceed will be issued as soon as possible thereafter.

All proposals become the physical property of Lackawanna County upon receipt.

V. Contractual Requirements

Because the project is funded by grants from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, the consultant must comply with grant-mandated requirements to be included in the consultant contract.

Change orders shall not be permitted, adding scope of work, unless the work topic is initiated by Lackawanna County and the NP municipalities.

VI. Payment to Selected Contractor

Payments for completed services will be issued upon presentation of an invoice summarizing work completed. A ten percent (10%) retention will be withheld on the final request for payment pending the completion of all requirements.

BID SHEET
North Pocono Planning Association
Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinances and Maps Update

Name of Firm: _____

Bid Amount: \$_____

Authorized Person completing this Bid Sheet: _____(Print Name)

Signature of Authorized Person: _____