



Request for Proposals

Strategic Plan and Reauthorization of the Reading Downtown Improvement District Authority

The Berks Alliance, a 501(c)3, focused on community development in Berks County, Pennsylvania, is seeking a consultant to develop a strategic plan for the City of Reading Downtown Improvement District (DID). As a second phase, the consultant may also be asked to assist with the process for reauthorization of the Special Assessment District that authorizes the DID and provides funding for operations. The current authorization for the DID expires December 31, 2020. The DID reauthorization process provides an opportunity to develop a strategic plan for the Downtown Improvement District and the authority, which in turn can form the basis for reauthorizing the DID. The DID has not adopted a strategic plan for several years, but has engaged in outside reviews of its operations, most recently a study completed by a team from a leadership development program called Leadership Berks. The Berks Alliance, in collaboration with the City Council and the DID Board, has agreed to fund a strategic planning process that would result in a strategic plan for the DID as Phase 1 of the project and a reauthorization plan as Phase 2.

Phase 1 Strategic Plan

Scope of Work

This planning process would include the following core elements:

- Developing a coherent and concise mission statement for the DID.
- Evaluate the current structure of the DID as well as on-going initiatives and practices to determine their success.
- Create a defined strategic plan for the ensuing two years and a general five-year strategic plan; with metrics for measuring success.
- A financial plan that identifies funding sources.
- A resource assessment of the existing authority resources, including staff and board.
- An assessment of potential partnership opportunities that would include at a minimum these opportunities: The Downtown Public Private Partnership, the West Reading Main Street Program, the City of Reading Department of Public Works, Parking Authority and Police Department.

An advisory committee will be created to support this process. That committee will include two members of the DID Authority Board, the DID Executive Director, the DID Legal Counsel, a member of city council, a representative nominated by the Mayor, a representative of the Downtown Public Private Partnership and of the Berks Alliance.

The process will include a meeting with the advisory committee and leadership staff of the DID to review the existing program goals, budget and funding and other materials required to develop a strategic plan and a reauthorization strategy. There will also be at least one community workshop to secure input for development of the strategic plan, as it will help shape the reauthorization of the DID.

The consultant shall produce a final report that includes the following elements:

- a. A general overview of the purpose of a downtown improvement, including requisite legal and regulatory requirements.
- b. A mission statement for the Reading DID and a statement of the purpose, objectives and functions of the DID
- c. A series of goals and tactics for the Reading DID over the next five-year period, including appropriate metrics to determine success.
- d. A two-year comprehensive budget that identifies funding streams and expenditures and a five year budget that outlines anticipated revenues and expenditures.
- e. A staffing plan for the DID, outlining general roles and responsibilities of staff.
- f. The governance structure for the Reading DID.
- g. Any municipal service agreements that might be required.
- h. A description of possible opportunities for collaboration with other organizations as deemed necessary by the DID.

This strategic plan should be completed by September 1, 2020.

Phase 2 Reauthorization Plan and Strategy

Scope of Work

- A reauthorization approach and strategy for the DID.
- The development of a reauthorization campaign, including preparation of materials, distribution of communications and the petition process required as part of the reauthorization process.

The Reauthorization Plan will include the following elements:

- The services to be provided;
- The projects that will be undertaken;
- The assessment rate;
- The duration of the reauthorization;
- A projected yearly budget for each year; and
- The name and the structure of the entity that will serve as the Neighborhood Improvement District Management Association.

There would be at least one meeting involving property owners and tenants of the properties within the DID as well as community and governmental leaders to develop the reauthorization strategy. The contracted consultant would be expected to attend city council meetings as required, including to make a final presentation about the plan as a part of the reauthorization process. Finally, if City Council

reauthorizes the DID, the consultant would be required to present at a forum for the property owners and tenants within the DID as a part of the reauthorization process.

Proposal Submission

Interested parties should provide a detailed proposal to David Myers at the Berks Alliance by April 30, 2020 which would address the items identified above and a cost estimate for each phase of the project. Interested parties should also provide information about their qualifications and experience in developing strategic plans for organizations and in working with organizations similar to a downtown improvement district.

The review of current operations and the creation of a strategic plan for the DID should be completed by September 1, 2020, in order to allow the completion of the reauthorization process by the end of 2020.

Completed proposals should be submitted electronically to:

- David Myers – Email: dmyers@greaterreading.org

Timing

- **Phase 1 Strategic Plan**
 - RFP Issued – April 10, 2020
 - RFP Submission Deadline – April 30, 2020
 - Consultant Selection – May 10, 2020
 - Consultant Work Begins – May 15, 2020
 - Consultant Report Submitted – September 1, 2020
- **Phase 2 Reauthorization Plan and Strategy**
 - Reauthorization Consulting Begins – September 14, 2020
 - Reauthorization Complete – December 31, 2020

Questions and Clarifications

For questions about this RFP or for clarification about its content and intent please contact David Myers at the Berks Alliance:

- Email: dmyers@greaterreading.org
- Phone: 570-428-2594