



Upper Saucon Township
5500 Camp Meeting Road
Center Valley, PA 18034
610-282-1171

Request for Proposal

Comprehensive Recreation and Open Space Plan

Upper Saucon, a second-class township in Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, is requesting proposals from qualified individuals or firms wishing to be considered for consulting services related to updating the Saucon Region Recreation and Open Space Plan adopted in 2006. The update to this plan is intended serve as a framework for future planning decisions regarding the delivery of recreation services and the protection of environmental resources and important open spaces, as well as a policy guide to determine the amount, location, and type of parks within the community.

Plan Background

The existing plan was prepared jointly with the adjacent municipality of Lower Saucon Township. However, since there are no shared recreation facilities with this municipality, it is intended that the update would focus only on Upper Saucon's resources, expected growth, and anticipated recreation and open space planning. The existing plan can be viewed at:

https://www.uppersaucon.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/recreation_open_space06.pdf

Since adoption of the 2006 Plan, the Township has experienced significant population growth, the addition of a regional retail center, and the development of regional employment opportunities as well as some loss of productive farmland and wooded hillsides throughout the Township. The Township adopted a new Zoning Ordinance in 2009 and a new Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance in 2011.

Community Background

Location – Upper Saucon is situated in the southeastern corner of Lehigh County, seven miles from the major services and employment centers of the Allentown-Bethlehem urbanized area. Upper Saucon is linked to the Lehigh Valley by two major State highways – PA Route 309 and PA Route 378, as well as to metropolitan areas in New York and New Jersey by Interstate Highway 78.

Demographics – According to the 2015 American Community Survey, the total population of the Township was estimated to be 15,629. This represents a 5.5% increase from the population of 14,808 reported in the 2010 census. The annual population growth rate is anticipated to remain in excess of 1% using an ESRI 2018 estimate of 16,585 residents and a 2023 ESRI population projection of 17,497.

Land Use – Once a largely agricultural and industrial community, a pattern of scattered residential development has increasingly consumed viable farmland. In addition, the Township is home to DeSales University, the Southern Lehigh School District elementary, middle and high schools as well as the Lehigh Valley satellite campus for Penn State University. Nearby Lehigh University controls more than 500 acres in the Township, much of which is adjacent to the major transportation corridors and is zoned to accommodate the growth of business and commercial development in the community. Lehigh University is also the principal owner of lands once dedicated to the zinc mining industry; including infrastructure linked directly to this industrial heritage of the community.

The existing zoning map reflects that the majority of land in the Township is zoned to accommodate current and future development of single family detached dwelling units. Existing, Township-owned open space includes a 49-acre community park on the east side of PA Route 309 with a 67.165-acre community park planned on the west side of PA Route 309 as well as more than 196 acres of vacant/undeveloped/unimproved land; some of which could potentially serve as some form of parkland or trail in the future.

Transportation – As previously mentioned, major thoroughfares located in the Township include Interstate Highway 78 running east from New York City to Allentown as well as PA Route 309 running north from Philadelphia through Quakertown to Interstate 78 as well as PA Route 378 running south from Bethlehem to join with PA Route 309. The manner in which these highways bisect the Township make pedestrian access and connectivity difficult to achieve.

Goals

The Township is interested in an update to the Plan which, at a minimum, addresses the following:

- Conduct a Township-wide, statistically valid needs assessment survey with a return rate that accurately represents a sampling of the community population for the purpose of identifying unmet current and future recreation needs. This assessment should specifically include an evaluation of:
 - The need for a recreation center
 - The current recreational programs and opportunities to improve them
 - The use of existing, dilapidated structures at the Township Community Park
 - The best use for Township-owned property at 7486 Passer Road
 - The potential development of Township-wide initiative to promote the overall health and fitness of Township residents.
 - The need for outdoor synthetic turf fields
- Examine the Township's trail and pedestrian network and make recommendations for improvement. Special attention should be given to development of the former Liberty Bell Trolley Line as a multi-use trail, identification of ways to promote bicycle circulation and safety as well as potential locations for crossing Route 309, and the provision of recommendations on how the Township can make its park facilities more accessible and inclusive.
- Inventory and condition report on the existing park facilities which should include the identification and prioritization of needed park improvements as well as future park and open space acquisitions.
- Analyze and update the Township's rec fee calculation and recommend any revisions based on consistency with the MPC regulations. In addition, all potential funding sources for park and open space projects need to be identified.
- Identify other agencies that may serve as partners to preserve and protect open space resources. This should include the potential for development of a park on the site of the President Pump located on land currently controlled by Lehigh University.

Submission Requirements

Each Proposal must include:

- Brief background on the firm
- Description of relevant work experience, capabilities, skills and expertise that qualify the firm to undertake the project. Evidence of prior projects that were developed to be easy to understand and use will be important indicators of appropriate qualifications and should be identified. Please include recent, relevant client references.
- Proposed scope of work including the approach to specific elements such as public outreach/community engagement and budgeting for capital improvements.

- Proposed schedule and budget.
- Identification of individuals who will be assigned to work on the project including their resumes, work experience, skills, and areas of expertise.

Interested firms shall provide two (2) hard copies and one (1) digital version of their proposal before 4:00 p.m. on June 14, 2019 to:

Upper Saucon Township
ATTN: Patrick Leonard
5500 Camp Meeting Road
Center Valley, PA 18034

The digital version and any questions may be sent by email to: pleonard@uppersaucon.org
Proposals received later than the above-referenced time will not be considered.