# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

# DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE PLAN

NEW FREEDOM BOROUGH
CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT & HERITAGE RAIL TRAIL CORRIDOR

*New Freedom Borough, York County, Pennsylvania*

## Calendar of Events

| | |
|---|---|
| September 23, 2026 | RFP publicly posted |
| October 30, 2026, at 4:00 PM | Deadline for proposal submission |
| November 13, 2026 | Estimated date of proposal selection |
| July 16, 2027 | Target project completion |

** Dates are anticipated and subject to required approvals and the Borough's review process.*

## 1. Invitation

New Freedom Borough is seeking proposals from qualified planning, engineering, urban design, and/or landscape architecture firms to develop a comprehensive Downtown Streetscape Plan for the Borough's Central Business District and the Heritage Rail Trail Corridor (Exhibit A). The plan will establish a coordinated, implementable vision for improving the visual character, walkability, accessibility, connectivity, safety, and economic vitality of the Borough's downtown core.

The primary study area will focus on the following corridors and their connections:

- Franklin Street
- Main Street
- Railroad Avenue
- Northern Central Railway and York County Heritage Rail Trail corridor

The selected consultant will work for New Freedom Borough as the contracting and lead entity. The Borough will retain final approval authority. The York County Economic Alliance (YCEA), through the York County Trail Towns program, will support RFP outreach, coordination, stakeholder engagement, and the planning process in partnership with the Borough.

Proposals shall be submitted electronically in PDF format to manager@newfreedomboro.org in accordance with Section 7.

## 2. Community and Project Background

New Freedom Borough participates in the York County Trail Towns program operated by YCEA. The seven-community program leverages outdoor recreation and trail-based visitation to support quality-of-life improvements, community revitalization, and opportunities within the outdoor and visitor economy. Each Trail Town community works through an action team of trail users, municipal officials, businesses, and other stakeholders to advance shared goals that improve the trail-user and community experience.

New Freedom has a long-standing goal of strengthening its Central Business District, a priority that has become increasingly important as the Borough has grown. Current available data estimates the Borough's population at approximately 5,168, representing an increase of approximately 6% since 2020. A recent mixed-use development in the Central Business District added 144 residential units, while five new businesses have opened in the downtown area during the past three years.

Major visitor and community assets include the 27-mile York County Heritage Rail Trail, Northern Central Railway (NCR), Freedom Green, and Marge Goodfellow Park. The Heritage Rail Trail receives more than 500,000 visits, with approximately one-third of visitors traveling from beyond a 50-mile radius of York County. NCR welcomes more than 20,000 excursion-train visitors,

approximately 62% of whom travel from outside York County. Borough parks are more than recreational spaces—they are vibrant community gathering places that help define the character and energy of downtown New Freedom. Throughout the year, these spaces come alive with signature events such as the Smoke on the Rail BBQ Festival, New Freedom Lions Club Carnival, New Freedom Fest, outdoor movie nights, and other community programming that attracts residents and visitors and creates opportunities to experience the Borough's downtown, businesses, and recreational amenities.

The Borough has undertaken several initiatives to strengthen pedestrian safety, accessibility, and connectivity within the downtown and Heritage Rail Trail corridor. These efforts include pedestrian-crossing improvements and adoption of a Complete Streets Ordinance establishing a framework for equitable, accessible, and context-sensitive transportation planning and infrastructure design. The Downtown Streetscape Plan should build upon these investments and translate the Borough's Complete Streets principles into coordinated, implementable improvements throughout the Central Business District.

Attention should be given to how the recently completed crossing improvements at Main Street and Franklin Street connect with the surrounding sidewalks, streetscape, trail and rail corridor, businesses, parks, and other downtown destinations. The study is not intended to redesign the recently completed crossing improvements, but rather to identify complementary improvements that strengthen connectivity, continuity, accessibility, wayfinding, and the overall downtown experience.

## 3. Project Goals

- Create a cohesive, attractive, and recognizable downtown environment that reinforces New Freedom's identity and sense of place.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, accessibility, comfort, and connectivity throughout the Central Business District.
- Strengthen physical and visual connections among the Heritage Rail Trail, Northern Central Railway, municipal parks, downtown businesses, residential areas, parking, and other destinations.
- Encourage trail and railroad visitors to explore the Central Business District, support local businesses, and extend their time in New Freedom.
- Ensure recommendations are consistent with the Borough's Complete Streets Ordinance and applicable local, state, railroad, accessibility, and transportation requirements.
- Develop realistic, phased, and fundable improvements that can advance from planning to grant applications, budgeting, design, and eventual construction.

## 4. Scope of Work

### Level of Study

The Downtown Streetscape Plan is intended to be a planning and conceptual design document that establishes a clear, implementable vision for future improvements and positions the Borough to pursue funding and subsequent design and construction phases. Unless specifically identified otherwise, the scope does not include final engineering, construction documents, detailed surveying, title certification, appraisals, detailed traffic engineering, hydrologic/hydraulic modeling, geotechnical investigation, infiltration testing, or final permitting. Recommendations should be developed to a

sufficient level to evaluate feasibility, establish priorities and phasing, prepare planning-level cost estimates, support future grant applications, and guide subsequent design and implementation.

The Borough welcomes consultant teams that propose an effective approach to the project. At a minimum, the scope should address the following tasks and considerations:

### 4.1 Existing Conditions and Project Area Assessment

- Document existing streetscape, roadway, sidewalk, bicycle, parking, wayfinding, landscaping, lighting, street-furnishing, accessibility, and pedestrian conditions within the study area.
- Evaluate pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and safety where the NCR and Heritage Rail Trail corridor intersect Borough streets, including crossing conditions, aesthetics, access, applicable regulations, parking, circulation, and conflicts among users.
- Assess opportunities and needs related to sidewalks, curb ramps, rail crossings, rail-yard interfaces, roadway conditions, tree canopy, landscaping, lighting, signage, furnishings, and other public-realm improvements.
- Property and right-of-way investigation shall be planning level and based upon readily available GIS information, plans, deeds, and other public records. The scope is not intended to include boundary surveys, title certification, appraisals, legal opinions, or preparation of easement or acquisition documents.
- Identify regulatory, railroad-operational, utility, accessibility, and other physical constraints that could affect proposed improvements.
- Evaluate existing stormwater drainage conditions within the project area and identify opportunities to incorporate stormwater management and green infrastructure into proposed streetscape improvements, including consideration of drainage patterns, existing conveyance infrastructure, impervious surfaces, tree canopy, landscaped areas, and potential stormwater best management practices (BMPs). Recommendations should seek opportunities to improve stormwater function while complementing pedestrian accessibility, streetscape aesthetics, and the overall character of the Central Business District. Stormwater and green infrastructure evaluations shall be conceptual and based upon available information, field observations, and readily identifiable existing conditions. Detailed hydrologic or hydraulic modeling, infiltration testing, final BMP design, or preparation of construction documents is not anticipated as part of this planning study.

### 4.2 Streetscape and Connectivity Concepts

- Develop concept-level alternatives for improving the streetscape and creating a contiguous, walkable, accessible downtown destination.
- Identify opportunities to improve connections between the Heritage Rail Trail/NCR corridor and downtown businesses, parks, parking areas, residences, and community destinations.
- Consider streetscape elements including sidewalks, crossings, lighting, landscaping and tree canopy, street furnishings, gateway features, public spaces, bicycle accommodations, signage and wayfinding, stormwater management and green infrastructure, and other appropriate amenities. Where feasible, concepts should identify opportunities to integrate stormwater best management practices (BMPs) into streetscape improvements in a manner that complements pedestrian accessibility, aesthetics, tree canopy, and the overall character of the Central Business District.
- Evaluate the interface between the recently completed Main Street and Franklin Street crossing improvements and the surrounding streetscape, sidewalks, trail, rail corridor, and downtown

destinations. Recommendations should focus on complementary improvements and connectivity rather than redesigning the recently completed crossings.
- Evaluate ownership and management alternatives where public access, easements, shared-use agreements, acquisitions, or other property arrangements may be necessary.

### 4.3 Economic Development and Placemaking

- Identify improvements that can help convert trail, railroad, park, and event visitation into increased activity within the Central Business District.
- Consider how streetscape design, gateways, wayfinding, public spaces, and connections can support business visibility, retention, investment, and growth.
- Incorporate placemaking recommendations that reinforce New Freedom's community character and relationship to the rail and trail corridor.

This task is intended to evaluate how physical streetscape, placemaking, wayfinding, connectivity, and public-realm improvements can support downtown businesses and visitor activity; a separate market analysis, economic impact analysis, or economic-development study is not anticipated.

### 4.4 Stakeholder and Community Engagement

The planning process shall include meaningful engagement with Borough officials and staff, YCEA/Trail Towns representatives, downtown businesses and property owners, residents, trail users, Northern Central Railway, York County representatives, and other relevant stakeholders. The consultant should propose an engagement strategy appropriate to the project, including opportunities for focused stakeholder input and public review of concepts and recommendations.

The Borough anticipates that a project advisory group may include representatives of Borough Council and/or the Mayor, Borough staff, the New Freedom Trail Towns Action Team, downtown businesses and property owners, YCEA, York County Parks, York County Planning Commission, Northern Central Railway, and other community partners as appropriate. Final membership will be determined by the Borough.

At a minimum, the planning process is anticipated to include three meetings with the project advisory group, one public workshop/open house to obtain community input and/or review project concepts, and presentation of the draft or final plan to Borough Council. Consultants may recommend additional engagement activities where they believe such activities would provide meaningful value within the available project budget.

### 4.5 Implementation, Phasing, and Cost

- Prepare planning-level cost estimates for recommended improvements.
- Identify logical implementation phases and priorities based on impact, feasibility, property considerations, regulatory requirements, and available funding.
- Identify potential grant and funding opportunities that may support design and implementation.
- Provide recommendations that can be scaled or phased as funding becomes available and that complement recent and planned Borough investments.

## 5. Required Deliverables

The final scope and deliverables will be refined with the selected consultant. At a minimum, the Borough anticipates the following products:

- Existing-conditions assessment and documentation of key opportunities and constraints.
- Project-area mapping and documentation of relevant property, right-of-way, easement, and access considerations, at a planning level.
- An overall preferred streetscape and connectivity concept illustrating the recommended vision and principal improvements throughout the study area.
- More detailed concept plans, sketches, and/or renderings for up to three priority focus areas to be identified in consultation with the Borough during the planning process. Potential focus areas may include the Main Street/rail-trail interface, Franklin Street/NCR station area, Freedom Green/downtown interface, or other locations identified through the planning process.
- Recommended preferred concept and supporting narrative.
- Pedestrian, bicycle, accessibility, parking/circulation, rail-crossing, wayfinding, landscaping/tree-canopy, lighting, furnishings, and public-realm recommendations, as applicable.
- Identify conceptual stormwater and green infrastructure improvements that could be incorporated into streetscape projects, where feasible, and include such improvements within applicable conceptual plans, phasing recommendations, and preliminary cost estimates.
- Planning-level cost estimates and a prioritized, phased implementation strategy.
- Identification of potential funding and grant opportunities.
- Draft plan for Borough and stakeholder review.
- Final Downtown Streetscape Plan in electronic PDF format, along with editable electronic files for maps, graphics, and other plan components developed for the project.

## 6. Existing Plans and Coordination

The consultant shall review and build upon applicable local and county planning documents and ongoing initiatives. Relevant materials may include, but are not limited to:

- New Freedom Borough Complete Streets Ordinance
- Marge Goodfellow Park Master Plan and other applicable parks and recreation planning documents
- York County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- York County Economic Action Plan
- York County Growth Management/Comprehensive Plan and applicable Open Space & Greenways planning documents

Borough and YCEA staff will assist the selected consultant in identifying and accessing applicable plans, studies, mapping, and background information. The consultant should identify any additional data or documentation needed to complete the work.

## 7. Proposal Requirements

New Freedom Borough, in partnership with YCEA, will consider proposals that present various approaches to completing the Downtown Streetscape Plan. Approximately $80,000 is available for completion of the Downtown Streetscape Plan. Proposers should develop an approach that provides the greatest value within the available project budget. Any recommended optional or supplemental services should be clearly identified and priced separately from the base scope. At a minimum, proposals shall include:

- Project understanding and a description of the proposed approach to the scope of work.

- Description of the firm's and project team's qualifications and relevant experience.
- Identification of the project manager and key personnel, including their anticipated roles.
- Description of at least three comparable projects involving downtown streetscapes, multimodal planning, trail-oriented development, community revitalization, railroad interfaces, or similar work. Include client references and contact information.
- Examples or links to representative completed plans, concepts, or implementation projects, where available.
- Proposed stakeholder and public-engagement strategy.
- Proposed project schedule demonstrating the consultant's ability to complete the final plan by June 30, 2027, including major project milestones, engagement activities, draft deliverables, and final plan completion
- Detailed fee proposal, including major tasks, anticipated level of effort, and reimbursable expenses, if any, demonstrating completion of the proposed base scope within the available project budget.
- Identification of any assumptions, exclusions, optional services, or information the consultant expects the Borough or partners to provide.

**Optional Services:** In addition to the base scope of services, proposers are invited to identify and separately price optional services that may provide additional value to the Borough. Optional services shall not be included in the base project fee and may be authorized at the Borough's discretion based upon available funding and project needs.

- Optional Property/Right-of-Way Investigation: Expanded investigation of property ownership, rights-of-way, easements, access agreements, or other property considerations affecting priority recommendations beyond the planning-level review included in the base scope.
- Optional Infrastructure/Stormwater Assessment: Expanded investigation of existing stormwater, utility, roadway, or related infrastructure conditions within priority areas beyond the planning-level observations included in the base scope.

Interested firms must submit one electronic PDF proposal to manager@newfreedomboro.org no later than 4:00 PM on October 30, 2026. Proposals must be signed by an authorized representative of the respondent.

Only submittals received by the deadline and meeting the requirements of this RFP will be considered. No proposal will be considered from a respondent that is in default under an existing agreement with New Freedom Borough or another Pennsylvania municipality or nonprofit organization, or that has failed to faithfully perform its obligations under a previous agreement with New Freedom Borough.

New Freedom Borough will not be responsible for any costs incurred by respondents in preparing or submitting a proposal.

## 8. Evaluation and Award

The Borough will evaluate proposals in consultation with YCEA and other project partners as appropriate. New Freedom Borough will retain final authority for consultant selection and contract award. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following factors:

- Understanding of the project and quality of the proposed approach.

- Relevant experience with downtown streetscape, multimodal transportation, trail-oriented development, placemaking, community revitalization, and/or projects involving active rail corridors.
- Qualifications and availability of the proposed project team.
- Quality and appropriateness of the stakeholder/public-engagement approach.
- Demonstrated ability to develop practical, implementable plans that have advanced to funding, design, and/or construction.
- Ability to complete the project within the proposed schedule.
- Cost, overall value, and alignment of the proposed level of effort with the Borough's objectives.

The Borough may conduct interviews with one or more firms, request clarification or additional information, negotiate scope and fee with the preferred firm, or waive informalities when determined to be in the Borough's best interest and consistent with applicable requirements.

New Freedom Borough reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to not select a consultant, and to reissue the RFP if the submissions do not adequately address the Borough's needs. The anticipated date for selection and contract award is November 13, 2026; however, the Borough reserves the right to adjust the schedule as necessary and subject to required approvals.

## 9. Questions

Questions regarding this RFP should be submitted preferably in writing by email to:

**Andy Shaffer, Borough Manager**
**New Freedom Borough**
**manager@newfreedomboro.org**

YCEA may assist the Borough with coordinating responses to questions and distributing clarifications or other RFP information to prospective respondents.

Purpose:
This map illustrates the primary streetscape study corridors and the surrounding community features for the Downtown Streetscape Plan. It is provided for reference only.

## Legend

- Existing Improved Crosswalks
- Northern Central Railway Station
- Municipal Park
- Streetscape Study Corridors
- Central Business District

# DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE PLAN

## STUDY AREA MAP

NEW FREEDOM BOROUGH
YORK COUNTY, PA

Date Produced/Author: 08/27/2026, CF/AT
Projection/Coordinate System: WGS 1984
Data Source: York County GIS

EXHIBIT A