

2026 Philadelphia Marathon Weekend Cheer Zone RFP Questions and Responses

Q: \$15,00 Budget

- Is the \$15,000 budget inclusive of the planning and production fee, or is that for experiential and production costs (barricades, flutter flags, cowbells, etc.)
- Is the \$15,000 budget listed in the RFP intended to include only operational expenses only or does that include compensation for the Coordinator and their staff in addition to operational expenses.
- Is this intended as a management fee only, or inclusive of hard costs? If inclusive of hard costs, what types are expected?
- Is the \$15,000 program budget intended to include fleet vehicles, fleet vehicle pricing and like for radios, generators, tables and tents, port-a-johns and other rental equipment?

A: 15,000 is just the fee for professional services. All other potential expenses can be submitted separately and reviewed by leadership. This additional budget for expenses is not required for the application, and details can be further discussed during the interview phase.

Q: How many sponsors are currently obligated to produce a cheer zone in 2026? Are there existing sponsor-affiliated Cheer Zones that must be accommodated? Is the Consultant responsible for managing sponsor relationships directly, or will that remain with the Marathon team?

A: Cheer zones are currently not included as an obligation in any sponsor contracts. As this program is built out, there is potential to expand sponsor affiliated cheer zones.

Q: Is the 2026 cheer zone plan intended to be similar to the 2025 cheer zones listed on the event website, and are there any known specific intended changes and or additions to locations or groups? Can the cheer zones be added, moved and/or removed? How many cheer zones would you like to have? Are they new or existing? Can you share the desired approximate locations along the race course?

A: The 2026 cheer zone plan is expected to include similar locations but expand throughout the city and race route. We expect the cheer zone coordinator to work closely with the Race Director, Course Manager and local community to strategically choose and expand cheer zone locations to best serve the athletes participating in the race.

Q: Can you prioritize the primary goals for the Cheer Zone program (runner morale, sponsor visibility, community engagement, media impact, etc.)?

A: Intentional coordination and liaison with the 70+ local run clubs and crews to ensure strategic placement and support for community run cheer zones with the goal of creating an engaging experience throughout the entire course to boost runner morale.

Q: Are there specific KPIs or success metrics (e.g., number of zones, number of volunteers, sponsor impressions, runner satisfaction scores)?

A: KPIs and success metrics will be strategically co-created with the PMW Leadership team.

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Q: What worked well and what were key challenges from prior years?

A: While we had a number of engaging cheer zones throughout the course last year and in years past, the PMW leadership team is looking for formalize the cheer zone program and process. We're also looking to making the program more cost effective and to prioritize the use of existing resources. We also believe that increased community engagement and incorporation with run clubs can lower overall race attrition rates.

Q: Will the City provide a registration platform, or should the Consultant provide one?

A: Consultant will need to provide or recommend a platform for registration.

Q: What level of production is expected at each Cheer Zone (basic signage vs. amplified sound vs. branded build-outs)? Is the extent of duties exclusively "cheer" zone or could it come to include "entertainment" zones?

A: This is up for discussion. Ideally, the cheer zones will be interactive. Some will have amplified sound and music. This position will create standards for the cheer zones in collaboration with the Race Director.

Q: Is the Consultant responsible for planning and funding the Thank You event? What scale is expected for the Thank You event (venue, catering, awards, etc.)? Is the post-race Thank You event solely for the Cheer Zone volunteers and staff or part of a bigger volunteer event?

A: TBD. This component is a new aspect of engagement. As we build out our more formal cheer zone program, we will work together to define what this looks like. Collaboration with various aspects of the marathon is encouraged.

Q: Is the intent for this portion of the event to be a self-sufficient, turn-key operation?

A: To a degree this portion will be self sufficient however, there are various aspects of the operation that will be supported by the overarching race weekend operations.

Q: When will course designs and certifications be final?

A: There are currently no plans to change course designs for 2026.

Q: Does the Contractor have the ability to negotiate stipends and "love offerings" to participating groups?

A: We are prioritizing proposals that are noninclusive of stipends and paid entertainment and moving towards community engagement.

Q: Who will be the Contractor's point of contact in-regards to coordinating vehicle passes, transportation plans and timelines?

A: The point of contact on the team will be designated once the contract is conformed.

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Q: Does the contractor have the ability to negotiate and procure supplies including foodstuffs and cheer giveaways?

A: Yes

Q: Is Philadelphia Streets Department responsible for removal of packed trash from location? Are sustainability measures in place for PMW?

A: Yes – sustainability plans and logistics will be further discussed upon contract

Q: Are partnerships with local bars and restaurants acceptable? Is alcohol allowable for post-race celebration?

A: Yes

Q: Are there any groups, clubs or business establishments with which we should avoid dialogue and potential partnerships?

A: Internal discussion

Q: Are pre-race meetings, meet-ups and welcome parties allowed in the budget? Is alcohol allowed at any such events?

A: TBD upon contracting

Q: Could you please forward expectations of insurance coverages required?

A: Insurance requirements will be determined based on the applicant's proposal.

Q: Does the coordinator have the ability to match bids for supplies and equipment rentals? (see Employee Conflict Provision)

A: Can be discussed during the interview phase.